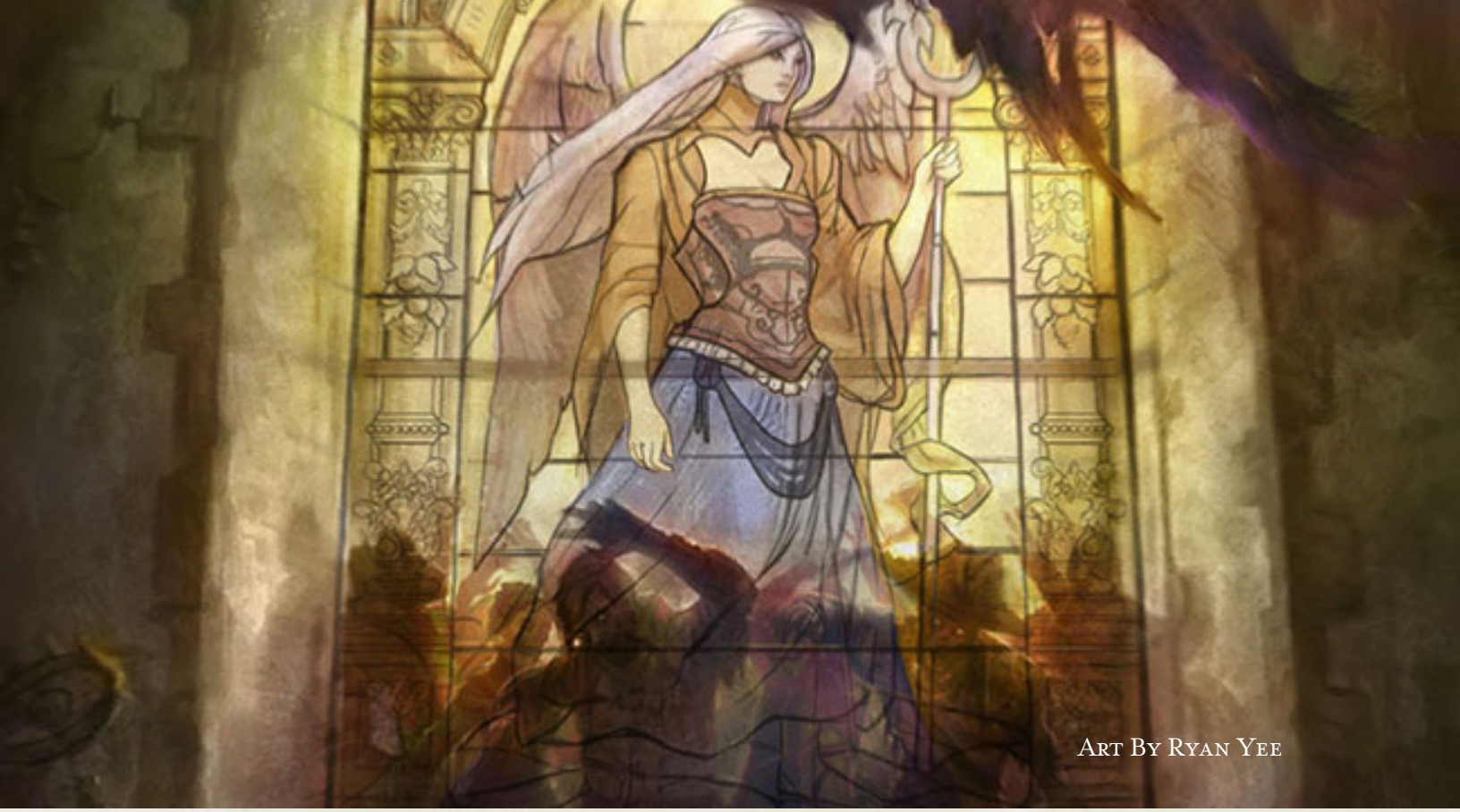


Art By Ryan Yee

Introduction

This is a fan-made adventure module using the D&D 5e system. All resources for running this adventure can be found here. All illustrations and names used from Magic: The Gathering, along with all D&D terms and rules, are properties of Wizards of the Coast. This is only a fan creation, not in any way made for sale.

Download the basic rules for FREE at here!

Innistrad is a setting steeped in gothic horror themes and makes liberal use of horror tropes. Werewolves hunt within the forests, vengeful spirits haunt the places of their grisly deaths, hedonistic vampires feast on humans at their leisure, and Frankenstein-like mad scientists create abominations stitched together from corpses. All these classic horror stories are merged together to create a unified campaign setting that is much more than the sum of its parts, an amazing and compelling backdrop for epic storytelling.

Learning About Innistrad

The vast majority of Innistrad's backstory can be found in the A Planeswalker's Guide to Innistrad series on Wizards' official site. The entire series does a great job summarizing everything you, the DM, need to know about the setting. Read it over once and then have it open for reference when running a game and you'll be set.

The first part of the series, Introduction, can work as a handout to give to players whose characters are native to Innistrad, as it contains mostly general knowledge – though you may omit bits of information at your discretion.

Players may have access to additional information based on which of the four provinces their characters hail from (if any). If a character lives in Kessig, you may want to give that player access to some of the information in A Planeswalker's Guide to Innistrad: Kessig as well, but double check to see if there's any information you as the DM would rather withhold. You'll likely want to omit the section about werewolves, as such information probably isn't known by average folk, and even some parts may be a mystery to werewolves themselves.

Characters that aren't locals may also discover information about places and people with appropriate Intelligence checks, such as Intelligence (Religion) to recall lore about the Church of Avacyn, or Intelligence (Nature) to recall lore about the basic geography of Stensia.

Art by Steve Prescott



province Nephalia, to earn coin from their respective trades. Bards travel from town to town as entertainers while Rogues often use their talents in criminal activities.

- Wizards pursue academic interests and are often well-respected scholars, astronomers, and alchemists. In the pursuit of knowledge, some require isolation in a quiet village or off somewhere on their own, while others seek colleagues in Nephalia's larger towns to combine research
- Barbarians often come from the province Kessig, a reflection of the untamed spirit of the land and its people. Some scholars point out similarities between a barbarian's rage and the ferocity of werewolves.
- Fighters come from all walks of life. These disciplined martial masters are often hired muscle for a wide variety of tasks, or do the work of the Avacyn Church as cathars, the militia of the Church.
- Sorcerers seem to manifest their powers out of nowhere, though there are rumors of the magic coming from their blood, or being permanently changed after exposure to raw magic.
- Warlocks can be anyone willing to make the taboo pact for power: Skirsdag cultists gladly enter them with the fiends they worship, those in touch with nature make pacts with the powerful fey spirits living in the forests, and most rare are the mad few that acquire a dark patron from beyond Innistrad itself. Warlocks must keep their pacts a secret or else face persecution, especially from the Church of Avacyn.
- Monks are a little tougher to fit, but it wouldn't be a huge stretch to say that perhaps most are trained as cathars for the Avacyn Church or are brought up in remote villages.

Adapting Innistrad to D&D

Innistrad is very compatible as a D&D setting. Almost everything in the setting functions well under the D&D system.

Classes

The classes present in the *Player's Handbook* not only fit seamlessly into the setting, nearly all of them are explicitly mentioned in the official lore:

- Paladins and Clerics would be exemplary soldiers and leaders within the Church of Avacyn, blessed with the capability to wield the Light and spread the Church's influence to the most dangerous corners of the world. They would most likely start their careers in Thraben, the seat of the Church.
- Rangers and Druids are both tied to the forests that cover most of Innistrad. Rangers are often hunters and wilderness guides, while Druids act as curators of the forests and mediators of ancient forest spirits. Both tap into the ancient, primal powers of nature that have been forgotten by most folk since the rise of the Avacyn Church.
- Bards and Rogues are drawn to more densely populated cities, such as the ones found in the

Races

One issue that you must decide upon is what races to allow from the *Player's Handbook* as natives of Innistrad. The official lore seems to indicate that elves have gone extinct long ago, and that other fantasy staple races like dwarves and halflings do not exist in this world.

There are a few ways to interpret the absence of non-human races. The most straightforward option would be to only allow human characters as natives of Innistrad. If you choose this option, it's strongly recommended that you let the players use the Player's Guide to Innistrad: Human Variants by redditor /u/Nihilates; the guide allows for mechanical variety within the human race and serves as a wonderful primer for players to learn about the province that their character hails from.

Another option would be to treat non-human natives as exceptionally rare: elves live in small communities deep

within forests, using cunning magics to keep themselves isolated from the outside world. Tieflings could be the result of sadistic experiments carried out by the demon-worshipping Skirsdag cultists – in fact, there is at least one official human/devil hybrid in the lore already: the planeswalker Tibalt. With a little bit of creativity you can fit any PHB race into Innistrad, but any non-human would certainly be a shock to the human locals they come across.

Religions

Another possible issue is what religions to allow. The majority of Innistrad's citizens worship the angel Avacyn, while minor sects pray to demons, and others give homage to woodland spirits. Do the natives of Innistrad have knowledge of other gods such as Bahamut and Pelor? Again, it's up to you, the DM, to figure out what to allow in your version of Innistrad. Just remember there's always a solution.

Innistrad in the D&D Universe

In the universe of Magic: The Gathering, Innistrad is its own separate plane, and the only known outsiders are planeswalkers. If you wish to bring Innistrad into the D&D universe, just plop it into the Material Plane as its own world, like *Forgotten Realms* and *Greyhawk* are. Visitation from outsiders would still be rare (much like the odd planeswalker visit) but it would allow outsider PCs with different races/religions to enter the land with the help of a portal or some advanced magic.

If we go a little further with this idea, the gothic horror doom and gloom that pervades all of Innistrad could be the influence of the Shadowfell; perhaps that shadowy plane has an unusually strong presence/overlap on this world. That's why the sun shines dimmer, the spirits of the dead are more restless, and everything is all-around dark and sinister compared to other worlds in the Material Plane.

The Truth About The Moon

Let's take things one step further. What if this strong tie to the Shadowfell came from a specific source? A source that is tied to many of Innistrad's supernatural happenings, dampening protective wards and empowering both werewolves and vampires? Yes, Innistrad's link to the Shadowfell is the moon.

The Innistrad moon is a massive portal to the Shadowfell plane. No one remembers what sinister entity constructed this link between planes, but the world of Innistrad was set to be consumed utterly by the Shadowfell. The deity



Art by Ryan Yee

that saved Innistrad from being swallowed up by the Shadowfell has similarly been lost to history.

This god could not close the immense portal, but managed to block off and imprison the portal at the cost of the deity's life. The god's corpse engulfs the portal as a massive desert of silver. The barrier of silver stops the Shadowfell from consuming the world, but does not block its influence entirely. You can see an imprint of the long-forgotten god on the moon to this day – it's the heron on the moon's surface.

This explains the seemingly paradoxical nature of Innistrad's moon: the portal to the Shadowfell inside of the moon empowers evil creatures, while the outside surface of silver empowers good. A full moon is when the portal to the Shadowfell is largest and is consequently when werewolves are strongest, yet blessed silver from the moon is the most effective at defeating them.

Running The Adventure

Army of the Damned is an adventure for four characters of 1st level. During the course of the adventure, the characters will advance to 5th level. You can keep track of experience by writing down the experience gained per event, which is provided by the module. Alternatively, you can choose the milestone experience system and level up when the adventure calls for it.

To properly run this adventure, you will need *Monster Manual* for D&D 5e. The combat statistics of monsters and NPCs in this adventure will be cited to the appropriate page. For example, Jeleva is a **vampire spellcaster** (MM p298), which means you will find her combat statistics in *Monster Manual* page 298. New monsters will have their statistics provided in APPENDIX B.

Similarly, magic items found over the course of this adventure will have their page in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* cited. New items will have their statistics provided in APPENDIX A.

The aforementioned Planeswalker's Guide to Innistrad should be read to get a feel for the adventure's setting. All other information will be provided here in the module.

Adjusting Difficulty

The combat events are tuned for four characters of the appropriate level (starting at level 1), following the combat difficulty guide outlined in *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

If for any reason you wish to strengthen/weaken the combat encounters, it's highly recommended that you use an encounter builder such as Kobold Fight Club. These builders use the calculations outlined in *Dungeon Master's Guide* and will help you adjust the difficulty of combat by adding/removing monsters to reach the desired difficulty.

For example, **3 zombies** (MM p316) are a Hard challenge for four level 1 PCs. If you have five level 1 PCs instead, that same encounter becomes a Medium challenge. You can bump the difficulty back to Hard by adding an additional zombie to the encounter.

With your handy online encounter builder, tuning combat difficulty to your personal playgroup is a quick and painless process.

Adventure Background

Humanity's Peril

The archangel Avacyn, the central figure of the Church of Avacyn and the main conduit of holy magic on the plane, hasn't been seen over the last few seasons, and her absence shows. Since Avacyn has disappeared, prayers have not spared remote villages from werewolf attacks as they once did. Holy symbols have not stopped vampires from preying on travelers in the high mountain passes. The dead are not protected from tampering by ghoulcallers and flesh-animating alchemists called skaberen. With the power of holy magic waning, humanity is being pushed into a corner by an encroaching darkness that threatens to consume them.

Only a select few elders in the Church, including Mikaeus, the ruling Lunarch, know what has happened to Avacyn; the archangel is trapped within the Helvault after a desperate struggle with the demon Griselbrand. To save Avacyn (if she is even alive) would require shattering the Helvault and releasing hundreds of years' worth of captured demons imprisoned within the silver prison with her, a risky move that may doom the plane utterly.

One Hope

Mikaeus and a handful of his most trusted advisors hatched a desperate plan: they believe that an artifact in the Church's possession, a mystical tuning fork, holds the key to retrieving Avacyn from the Helvault without releasing the demons trapped with her. Not understanding how to wield the artifact themselves, the elders have secretly delivered the fork to a musical prodigy in Stensia named Katarina Brunn, hoping her talents can unlock its power while the Church tries to maintain order in the world.

Mikaeus knows that the secret demon-worshiping cult, the Skirsdag, have human members embedded within Thraben in all levels of the church, nobility, and the trades; the Lunarch believed it would be safer if Katarina studied the artifact in her home town of Shadowgrange, far away from the Skirsdag's influence. The province of Stensia has

plenty of its own dangers, however.

Voldaren's Lesson

Katarina Brunn led the local militia of Shadowgrange, having trained as a paladin in her youth, even joining the ranks of the Riders of Gavony for a time. As impressive as her martial and leadership abilities were, it was her reputation of being a musical prodigy that made the Acacynian Church elders decide to select her to unlock the mysteries of the tuning fork artifact. Indeed, she was making great progress into figuring out the artifact.

Shadowgrange is one of the bleakest places in all of Innistrad. Aside from their own local members, the people are isolated from the Church of Avacyn's influence. Shadowgrange is situated deep in the heart of Stensia, surrounded by vampire estates that view humans as cattle, and is mostly cut off from the outside world. The villagers are fiercely passionate about their lifestyles and have immense pride in their traditions. This is mostly a coping mechanism to hide the truth – they are paranoid and fearful of their situation. Villagers disappear with a grim regularity, usually as a meal for vampires, and the people have been conditioned for generations to do nothing about it.

There were murmurs of change in the past few years, however. Katarina and her fiancee, an alchemist named Siegfried, led a movement to defend themselves from the vampires and other horrors in the night. They bolstered the town's defenses and tried to convince the villagers to fight. For a while, their efforts were successful – until Avacyn disappeared, and the holy wards around the village began to falter.

Two months ago, while Katarina was deep in her experiments with the artifact, vampires from Voldaren Manor entered the village. The vampires were preparing to celebrate the disturbing three-day holiday called Court of the Vampire Queen, and came to collect their unfortunate "Queen" – Katarina, the troublemaker. Katarina, Ralph, and Siegfried fought the vampires alone. The trio pleaded and begged with the villagers to help, but their friends and neighbors all stood by, frozen in fear. In the end, Ralph was killed, Katarina was taken, and Siegfried was convinced by his love to flee and keep the artifact safe.



Art By Igor Kieryluk



Art by Dave Kendall

Revenge of the Damned

Siegfried was devastated with what happened. He and Katarina's family dedicated their lives to serve and protect the people of Shadowgrange, only to be betrayed by them. In a fit of rage, grief, and despair, he left the village, vowing vengeance on all of Katarina's murderers.

The alchemist has taken up residence in the abandoned Maurer Estate. There he pursues the darker side of alchemy, the necro-alchemy of producing skaabs. Siegfried has teamed up with ghoulcaller Rinelda Smit, and together they have a mad plan to build an army of skaabs and ghouls, taking the fight to the Voldaren estate itself.

To build an army of undead requires many corpses. Siegfried has a decent supply, but he'll need more, hundreds more to dare challenge the Voldaren family. The skaberen has turned his eyes towards Shadowgrange: the villagers damned so many with their cowardice. They damned all those that disappear in the night with no retaliation, all those that begged for help, including his beloved Katarina, who devoted her life to help them.

If the cowards refuse to fight the vampires in life, they'll fight them in death.

Overview

Army of the Damned is divided into four parts.

In Part 1, "Into Stensia," the adventurers are on the road to the village of Shadowgrange, entering the province of Stensia through the Kruin Pass and now journeying into the inner valley via the Hofsaddel Pass towards Shadowgrange. During this treacherous journey, the adventurers may come across deadly foes and potential allies, some of these encounters laying hooks for short adventures in part 2.

In Part 2, "Shadowgrange," the characters arrive in Shadowgrange to find the village in a state of unrest after a brazen vampire attack. The adventurers must enter the mayor's haunted house to retrieve the Church's holy relic. They can also investigate the mystery of the abandoned

alchemy shop and help various locals with smaller problems.

In Part 3, "Night of the Dead," the characters must deal with approaching undead threat led by ghoulcaller Rinelda. They can lead a defence or evacuation of the village. Once the zombies have been addressed, the adventurers can continue on their main mission of retrieving the artifact from Siegfried.

In Part 4, "Into the Farbog," the characters travel through the farbog towards Maur Estate where Siegfried resides, wading through spirits and deadly monsters.

In Part 5, "The Perfect Storm," the characters infiltrate Mauer Estate, making their way past its vile defenses until confronting Siegfried in his laboratory, where the mad scientist is putting the finishing touches on his ultimate creation.

Adventure Hooks

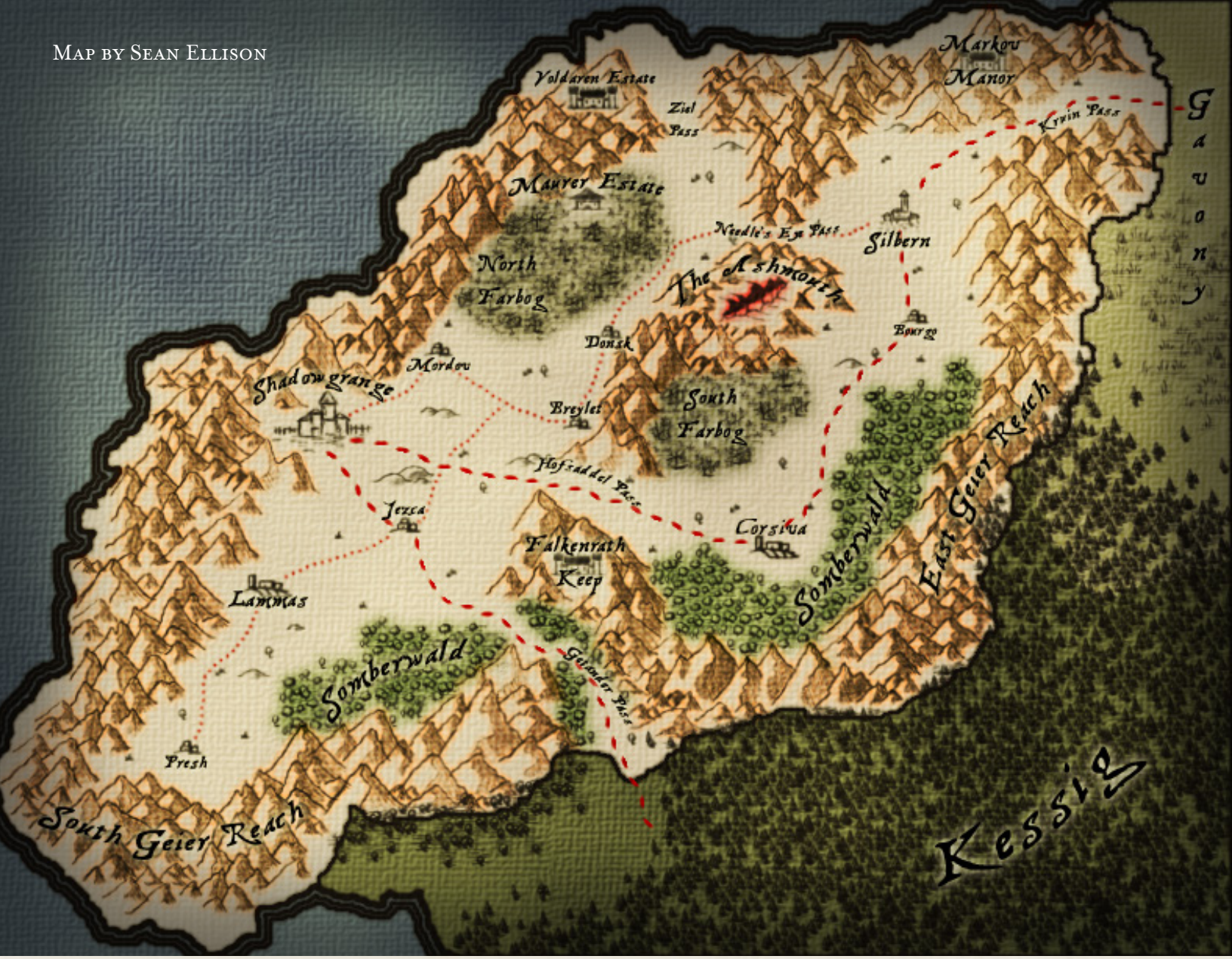
You can let players invent their own reasons for visiting Shadowgrange, or they can use the following backgrounds as an easy way to create characters with compelling ties to the events of Army of the Damned.

Below is a list of bonds that applies to any background that players select or create. You can replace or augment some or all of the options in your chosen background with one or more of the bonds.

BOND (D8)

1. The Church of Avacyn has hired you to make contact with Katarina Brunn, a musical prodigy living in Shadowgrange, whom they have not heard from in months. You must find her and/or retrieve an artifact that was under her care.
2. A letter has arrived summoning you to Shadowgrange. Your cousin, Siegfried Reinholdt, has fled from his home in Shadowgrange under mysterious circumstances, and the deed to his property has passed to you. Whatever you choose to do with the shop, you must travel to Shadowgrange to sign the necessary papers.
3. You have infiltrated the ranks of the demon-worshipping Skirsdag cult. The cult has found out about a secret plan that the Church of Avacyn is carrying out, something involving an artifact being held by a woman named Katarina living in Shadowgrange. You are under orders to investigate this artifact.
4. Sielda Reishaf, an elder of the Avacyn Church and your foster parent, has entrusted you with an important mission: travel to Shadowgrange and find Katarina Brunn. If she is missing, then retrieve the artifact she was holding, a so-called "tuning fork."
5. The holy tomb of Saint Traft, one of the most righteous and celebrated cathars to walk the land, is located in Shadowgrange. You've decided to make a holy pilgrimage to the saint's tomb, where it's said visitors occasionally receive aid in the form of prophecy and omens.
6. Every few nights, you have a strange sequence of apocalyptic dreams where the holy city of Thraben is overrun by fiends and undead. Each time, the dream ends with you holding a strange object in your hand and a silver monument shattering in front of you, releasing a flood of light that cleanses the city. You feel a strange compulsion to travel to Shadowgrange, convinced that the object of your dreams is there.
7. You have a secret. You were once a Skirsdag cultist, but at the end of your life you tried to change your ways for good. With your dying breath, you prayed to the moon for redemption. A vision came to you in the shape of a silver heron. It told you to find an artifact named the Strionic Resonator in Shadowgrange and free Avacyn. You awoke in a new body, your memories of your former life but a dim shadow. Only the vision with the silver heron remains in your mind with perfect clarity.

Map by Sean Ellison



Part 1: Into Stensia

The adventure begins with the player characters on the road, traveling from Thraben to Shadowgrange (MAP). The journey took them through the province Gavony into Stensia via the Kruin Pass, a treacherous pass through the mountain range called Geier Reach, which cuts off Stensia from the rest of the provinces. The characters journeyed through Stensia's inner valley and now cross Hofsaddel pass into the outer valley where Shadowgrange resides.

Before you begin, have your players introduce their characters. Let them explain why their characters are making the journey from Thraben to Shadowgrange, either from one of the preconstructed backgrounds or something they've made up on their own. When you're ready to begin, read or paraphrase:

Your journey from Thraben to Shadowgrange has been relatively safe and mercifully uneventful so far. The road drifted across the rolling hills and heaths that make up the landscape of province Gavony, taking you through small villages and quiet farmlands.

A few days ago you entered Geier Reach, the imposing mountain range that cuts Stensia off from its neighboring provinces. The trail through it, called Kruin's Pass, was a long, jagged path that cut up and over the mountainsides, until finally you entered Stensia proper. The last few days had you trek through Stensia's inner valley, passing through the small settlements Silbern, Bourg, and Corsiva, until earlier today when you crossed the threshold into the outer valley via the Hofsaddel Pass.

The journey continues through Stensia's outland valley along winding stone paths dotted by grim pine trees and flanked by the far-flung mountain ranges whose boney peaks reach into the cloudy sky. Sprouting from one such mountain is a castle with many spires, its imposing structure casting a long shadow down from the stony peaks. A hazey fog looms over the valleys, lightly obscuring objects in the distance. The sky is awash in warm orange-red, with dark purplish-red clouds covering the setting sun.

In this part of the adventure, the players have just entered Stensia's outland valley via Hofsaddel Pass. The castle overlooking the pass is Castle Falkenrath, the home base of the Falkenrath vampire bloodline. Common local knowledge would know of the castle and the need to avoid approaching it closer than necessary.

The journey to Shadowgrange will take two days.

Road Encounters

Along the way, the characters will partake in four of the following events below. These events serve as an introduction into the lands, setting the tone of the world, feeding little bits of lore to the players, and establishing that Stensia is a dangerous place to travel.

Choose four of the events, marking when they occur (day/night). Alternatively, roll a D8 and consult the Road



Art by James Paick



Art by James Paick

Encounters table to determine what the party meets, rerolling 8's and any duplicate results. You may choose to divide the four events into two per day, or randomly distribute them by rolling a D4(-1) to determine which day the event occurs.

The difficulty of combat encounters and their subsequent XP awards assume a party of four level 1's. If this is not the case in your game, or if you wish to make the combat easier or harder, you may tweak the combat encounters to your desired difficulty with Kobold Fight Club or similar builders.

d8	Event
1	Ancient Devoutees
2	Cloud of Teeth
3	Explosive Summons
4	Fiendish Hecklers
5	Into Darkness
6	Ominous Bridge
7	Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

Ancient Devoutees

The adventurers come across the ruins of a small roadside chapel, its name long forgotten.

Tucked between the road and the mountainside are the dilapidated remnants of a small chapel. The roof had caved in long ago, and the wood and stone foundation are half-covered in dirt and vegetation. Shards of colored glass from what once were stained glass windows litter the ground near the entrance.

With Avacyn's presence fading from the world, foul magic has corrupted the earth here, and the dead have been forced to rise. **3 skeletons** (MM 272) (PICTURE) and **1 skeleton priest** (same stats as skeletons, just reskin its shortbow as a magical bolt of nectoric energy) – the remains of the chapel's priest and three cathars that died defending it -- are damned to carry out their last holy prayers for eternity. When the adventurers approach, the skeletons are in the middle of this unending "service."

If the PCs look inside, read or paraphrase:

Three figures geared in weathered leathers of cathars sit on the rotted wooden pews with their heads bowed in reverence. Standing in front of them, at the far end of the chapel behind a dilapidated podium, is a skeleton garbed in tattered priestly robes, its armed outstretched ceremoniously.

If the skeletal priest notices the PCs, it will gesture them to join the service and sit. If the PCs take hostile actions or loot the chapel, all the skeletons will attack. If a PC tries to put the skeletons to rest with any reasonable idea (helping lead the ceremony to its conclusion, for example) and succeed a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check, the skeletons collapse and spectral images of their former living selves briefly appear, thank the PCs and reward them with the tithe bowl (see below) before fading away.

Treasure

A thorough search of the chapel ruins and a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a silver tithe collecting bowl buried in rubble beside the altar. The bowl contains 17 cp, 14 sp, and 2 gp, while the ornate container itself is worth 15 gp to jewelers or employees of the Church.

While most of the skeletons' possessions are too rusted and decayed, one of the skeletons still grips a *silver-inlaid dagger* (APPENDIX A) (PICTURE).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 150 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the skeletons.

Cloud of Teeth

3 swarms of skeletal bats (APPENDIX B) are flying in the adventurer's direction. They roam the road with the singular motive of ripping apart any traveler unfortunate enough to come across them.

Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) 16 or

higher can sense the swarm's approach 200 ft. away as they round the bend. A passive Perception of 14 or higher notices them 120 ft. away, and a 12 or higher notices them 60 ft. away. Finally, all can hear/see the swarm emerging from the fog ahead of them 30 ft. away.

You hear a cascading sound of high-pitched chirps and screeches coming from somewhere up ahead. It's faint at first, but slowly rising in volume. There's a dark blotch in the mists in front of you, and now you can hear the screeching more clearly, along with the flapping of many tiny wings. The dark blotch grows and takes form – it's a cloud of skeletal bats!

The swarms attack any living beings in their way mercilessly with tiny razor-sharp bites. Each swarm moves to a character, enters their square, and begins attacking. They fight to the death.



Art by Svetlin Velinov

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 150 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the skeletal bats.

Explosive Summons

A group of Skirsdag cultists have been conducting a ritual inside a roadside cave to summon demons into the world. The ritual reaches its explosive conclusion as the party approaches.

The quiet valley is suddenly filled with a thunderous booming sound that rumbles through the earth. A chorus of otherworldly screams are heard off in the distance, an eerie cry of pain, horror, and celebration. Moments later, a large, dark humanoid figure emerges from the mountainside up ahead, taking to the air with broad, leathery wings. Black smokes streams up into the sky from where the figure emerged.

Shilgengar, the **demonlord of ashmouth** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE), emerges from the cave where the summoning ritual took place, 450 ft. away from the approaching adventurers. He hasn't seen the characters on the road and begins flying off north to Mauer Estate. The demon shouldn't take notice of the characters unless the adventurers take very foolish steps to grab his attention. The adventurers may encounter Shilgengar again in Chapter 4.

The cave is not far from the path the adventurers are taking. Wisps of black sulfurous smoke streams from the cave's mouth. The stone surfaces inside the cave are badly scorched from the fiery summoning. The cave is dimly lit by numerous wax candles littering the walls and floor, most knocked over from the explosion. Charred corpses of several cultists are on the floor, the palms of their hands ritually slashed open, their blood used to paint a wide red circle on the floor. The stone floor in the middle of the bloody circle has fallen through, now a gaping chasm that spews heat and sulfurous black smoke. The bottom of the chasm is lost in darkness.

When the adventurers investigate the cave or pass it by, **2 hellriders** (APPENDIX B) riding **2 ashmouth hounds** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE) emerge from the chasm and attack on sight. They fight to the death.

Leaping out of the chasm with a howl is a monstrous fiery hound, its razor-sharp claws and teeth crowned with flame. Riding atop this large dog is a small impish humanoid with long backswept horns and hard, chitin-like dark red skin. The fiend grins wide, revealing rows of needle-like teeth, its red eyes burning bright with

anticipation as it yanks the iron reigns of its steed, urging it faster towards you.

Developments

Characters investigating the chasm find that the earth has resealed the bottom. No more demons will emerge from it -- at least until another summoning occurs.

A thorough search of the cultist bodies, along with a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check, notices that each cultist had been stabbed in the chest. A follow-up DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check notes that each cultist was ritually stabbed in the heart with a dagger with no signs of struggle, and a check result of 15 or higher notes that the killing strokes were delivered hours before the ritual completed. The ritual dagger is nowhere to be found.

While most of the cultists that participated in the summoning ritual stuck around for its explosive conclusion, a Wisdom (Perception) check DC 12 reveals two pairs of humanoid footprints that left the cave only hours ago. The footprints arrive at a horses' prints and an Intelligence (Nature) check DC 10 confirms that they rode off in the direction of Shadowgrange.

These two surviving cultists are Shadowgrange residents Otto and Magda Botler. They ritually killed the other willing cultists to complete the summoning and left before the ritual finished. The characters may encounter these two in the next chapter.

Treasure

If characters loot the cultist bodies, they'll find a total of 25 cp, 18 sp, and 12 gp.

One of the cultists also carries a gilded ram's horn. It's worth 25 gp to the right (shady) buyer. Etched on its side is a symbol that characters can identify with an Intelligence (Religion) check DC 15 -- the symbol of the archdemon Griselbrand, the most venerated demon of the Skirsdag.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 250 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the hellriders and ashmouth hounds.

Fiendish Hecklers

3 smoke mephits (MM 217) follow the characters as they journey through the valley.

You hear snickering and cackling coming from your left, echoing off the mountain range. A raspy, shrill voice calls out, "you don't want to go that way! You'll die too soon and spoil our fun!" Looking left, you notice three black figures hovering in the air. The small impish creatures billow smoke from their hazy bodies.

The mephits keep out of the party's attack range, defaulting to a distance of about 100ft. from the adventurers. They flee if attacked, only to sneak back with their Stealth +4. They'd much rather verbally attack the adventurers than get physical.

The elementals try to mislead the adventurers to make them go the wrong way or doubt themselves. They could "warn" them of a dead-end up ahead, or of a powerful demon preying on the road, always fabrications.

The mephits constantly mock the characters at every opportunity. They'll insult the studious wizard's intelligence, call the strong barbarian weak, and complain about the bard's terrible music. They love getting a rise out of characters, even if they are destroyed in the process.

Developments

If the adventurers are preoccupied fighting in a different combat encounter and seem to be winning, one of the mephits will sneak up to an adventurer furthest from his or her allies (typically a ranged character) and use its Cinder Breath before flying away, cackling. Smoke mephits are total jerks like that.

The mephits stalk the adventurers relentlessly until all of them are destroyed or the party reaches Shadowgrange (maybe even longer!).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 150 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the mephits.

Into Darkness

At night, **2 shadows** (MM 269) begin to stalk the party. They will try to make a Dexterity (Stealth) check to hide in the party's shadows, waiting until they are split up or sleeping before attacking. The shadows are drawn to the characters that radiate the most goodness in terms of lifestyle, attitude, and personality. For example, they will prioritize attacking the good-aligned paladin over the neutral wizard.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 200 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the shadows.

Ominous Bridge

The land ahead drops off into a dark, stony ravine. A dilapidated bridge offers the most obvious way over. Aside for the chunks of missing stone and its ruinous appearance, the bridge is sturdy enough. That is not the true danger, however. A **giant spider** (MM 328) and **giant**

wolf spider (MM 330) (PICTURE) lay in wait on the bridge's underbelly. Thin strands of nearly invisible webbing coating the bridge alerts the spiders to any movement on top. The spiders instinctively attack anything that disturbs their webs, but flee if taken below half their health points.

A Wisdom (Perception) check DC 15 notices the thin webbing on the bridge. An Intelligence (Nature) check DC 10 confirms the webbing to belong to giant spiders. Taking a peek under the bridge (hopefully not too close!) can spot the spiders lurking in the shadows with a Wisdom (Perception) check DC 20.

Webs. Thin webs cover the surface of the bridge. The squares are difficult terrain, and a creature trying to move through them must succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. On a failure, the creature is restrained in the webs. A snared creature can take an action each round to attempt to break free with a DC 12 Strength check, or it can try to cut its way free by using a light weapon that deals slashing damage. The webs have AC 10, 5 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.

Developments

Characters can choose to avoid the bridge and spiders entirely and navigate down into the ravine and back up the other side, adding several hours to their journey. It takes a Strength (Athletics) check DC 10 to climb up or down the ravine walls.

Treasure

Three web cocoons are stuck on the bridge's underside. Adventurers looking under the bridge can notice the cocoons tucked into shallow pits with a Wisdom (Perception) check DC 20. Reaching the cocoons is another challenge altogether. If they come up with a way to do so and loot the dessicated corpses, they'll find 30 cp, 27 sp, and 8 gp in coins, emerald-encrusted earings and a gold necklace with a tear-shaped ruby together worth 30 gp total, and a *potion of healing*.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 250 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the giant spiders or goes around them.

Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

The party arrives at a roadside shrine. Before, these shrines provided travellers a safe haven, its protective magics warding the immediate area from evil creatures. But with the archangel Avacyn's disappearance, the holy magic of the shrine has gone dormant.

The jagged stone road curves around a stony peak. As you round the bend, you see an alcove in the mountainside. In the middle of the alcove, bursting through the rocky ground, is a wide pine tree stump. Carved from what used to be its trunk and rising up from its stump is the symbol of the Church: Avacyn's Collar. Wild flowers, wooden trinkets, and prayer beads adorn the shrine.

Kneeling in prayer in front of the shrine is a pale sweaty human wearing dirty, torn shepherd's clothing.

The praying man is Anton Wepper (PICTURE), a shepherd from the village Lammas. Anton carries a dark secret: a few nights ago he was bitten by a **werewolf** and cursed with **lycanthropy** (MM 206). Fearing for the safety of his loved ones, he left his home and is making the trek to Shadowgrange, hoping to pick up supplies there and then continue on to the farbog to live in isolation. Anton has been praying ceaselessly to Avacyn hoping not to let the curse take hold, but unknown to him, tomorrow night is a full moon, which will cause him to involuntarily transform into a werewolf.

Anton is initially fearful of the PCs but can be calmed down if they prove they aren't vampires or other monsters. If Anton finds out that they're going to Shadowgrange, he begs to come along, as the road is dangerous. He tells them that he's stopping by Shadowgrange to start a new life, which is vague but true. If pressed about his motives, he lies, saying that he inherited land near Shadowgrange and he is traveling to sign papers. He's also willing to provide any local knowledge about Stensia, basic information about important locations, rumors, dangers on the road, and other bits of local knowledge.

A Wisdom (Insight) check DC 13 can notice that the nervous shepherd is withholding information. A Wisdom (Perception) check DC 15 notices a burn mark in the shape of Avacyn's Collar on his wrist (Anton hides it under his sleeve). An Intelligence (Religion) check DC 13 confirms that the signs point to lycanthropy. An Intelligence (Nature) check DC 13 confirms the next full moon for tomorrow night. Getting Anton to speak truly about his curse can be done through diplomacy, intimidation, and other methods.

Developments

The shrine's divine magic lays dormant. A character can spend an hour performing the proper holy rituals with an Intelligence (Religion) check DC 15 to reactivate the divine magic. Doing so grants anyone resting at the shrine an Inspiration Point, and evil creatures are compelled not to approach the shrine's immediate vicinity.

Anton is a good man but afraid to die. If the party figures out his curse, he begs them to help, swearing that he is faithful to Avacyn and doesn't want to hurt anyone. He

needs them to escort him to Shadowgrange where he can pick up supplies and escape north into the swamps, away from human civilization.

If he feels his life is threatened, Anton will make a desperate attempt to defend himself. He is a **commoner** (MM 345) with a light crossbow.

The next night, when the full moon rises, he transforms into a **werewolf** (MM 211), losing all self-control and goes on a murderous rampage.

Treasure

Anton carries a small sack of coins holding 15 cp, 4 sp, and 1 gp. In the shepherd's coat pocket is his most treasured possession, an *avacyn collar* (APPENDIX A) (L). Anton can no longer wear it as *blessed silver* burns his flesh. If the characters agree to let him travel with them, he gives them the chain as thanks before parting ways.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 300 XP equally among the characters once they've dealt with Anton any way they choose. In the event that they defeat him once he's transformed into a werewolf, instead divide 600 XP.

Conclusion of Part 1

On the end of the third day of travel, the party arrives at Shadowgrange, where the adventure continues in part 2.

Awarding Experience Points

Reaching the village of Shadowgrange completes a story milestone. Divide 300 XP equally among the characters. This should provide enough XP for the characters to attain 2nd level.

Milestone: Level 2!

If you are using Milestone Experience, then the characters attain 2nd level once they reach Shadowgrange.



Art by Vincent Proce



Art by James Paick

Part 2: ShadowGrange

Shadowgrange (MAP) is one of the oldest human settlements in Stensia. Most of the villagers are farmers, the majority being shepherds. The rest of the villagers work in trades that support the farmers by spinning wool, weaving clothes, shoeing horses, milling grain, and the like. Some merchants move goods from Shadowgrange to other settlements such as Lammas, but shipments move less frequently these days as the roads become more dangerous.

In the last two years, Shadowgrange has experienced a swell of new citizens that sought refuge behind the village's fortifications. Most of these folk come from smaller remote villages that have been destroyed by over-indulgent vampires, mindless undead, or sadistic ghoulcallers. With Avacyn's presence missing from the land, the protective holy wards of these villages are failing, and creatures of the night are making bolder attacks. Shadowgrange's moat and stone walls make it one of the best defended villages in the area, but many villagers secretly believe that this settlement will eventually fall just like the rest.

When characters first arrive in Shadowgrange, read or paraphrase:

The valley dips downward and you see dozens of sheep flocks roaming the thin, wispy hills, with shepherds watching over them. Beyond, nestled in a corner beside the jagged mountain range, is Shadowgrange. The dirt path swings around farms and wooden cottages until it reaches the village's moat, where sheep gather round for a drink. Beyond the drawbridge over the water stands an iron-reinforced wooden gate flanked by two guards, the only way through Shadowgrange's stone walls. A small grove of hawthorn trees grows near the moat and more branches can be seen poking over the village walls.

2 guards (MM 347), twin brothers Lars and Sven, stand watch outside of the village gates. These cathars hail the adventurers as they approach over the drawbridge. In a cold formal tone, they check to see if the characters are fiends by asking them to give them the palm of their hand, which they touch with an *avacyn collar* made of *blessed silver* (APPENDIX A).

Once satisfied that the characters aren't supernatural abominations, the guards, Lars animates dramatically, tossing aside his formal speech and tries to chum it up with the newcomers, much to the bemoaning of Sven, who deems this "unprofessional." Lars is a lighthearted and curious fellow, rarely seeing strangers in the area, and the adventurers intrigue him. The twins are willing to provide local knowledge to the characters and point them in the direction of wherever they need to go.

Encounters in Shadowgrange

The party will probably want to freshen up after their long journey to Shadowgrange. They can rest at the inn, restock their supplies at the general shop, acquire new weapons at the blacksmith, and receive divine blessings at the village church. The party's goals will then lead them to one or more of the following locations:

Haunted House. All adventure hooks involving Katarina Brunn or the holy relic lead to the haunted house of the former mayor. Villagers questioned about these things direct the PCs to Priestess Flora at the chapel where they can get more information.

Alchemist's Shop. Siegfried's alchemy shop has been abandoned ever since he left Shadowgrange. The villagers are concerned about Siegfried's disappearance, and that the hawthorn tree growing in the center of the shop is mysteriously dying. Any inquiries about the shop are directed to Captain Levi at the visgaud grounds.

Saint Traft's Memorial. Inside Shadowgrange's chapel is a statue commemorating the local saint, Traft. One of the greatest cathars to have ever lived, it's said that his spirit occasionally bestows blessings on worthy visitors. Characters making pilgrimage to Traft's memorial will be pointed here.

Important NPCs

Here is a quick summary of the most important NPCs in Shadowgrange, and their relevance to the adventure.

Eckhardt Sheck	Innkeeper
Magda Botler	Owns a trading post; secretly a Skirsdag cultist; has a cursed item for the party
Flora Mayweather	Head priestess of Shadowgrange's chapel; has a quest for the party
Marcus Ritter	Blacksmith; has a quest for the party
Silvia Wintsch	Fletcher; has a quest for the party
Captain Levi	Captain of the local militia; has a quest for the party

Roleplaying Shadowgrange NPCs

The humans of Shadowgrange are stoic folk, neither expressive nor demonstrative people. Countless generations of hardship and proximity to the vampire strongholds – lost children, lost neighbors – have taught them to guard their hearts. They are proud and fervent in their beliefs but seem brusque or even cold to outsiders.

Times have been particularly rough these past few seasons with the disappearance of Avacyn. The holy wards protecting humanity are losing power, and the villagers are becoming more paranoid and fearful as attacks from creatures of the night become bolder and more frequent. Shadowgrange is becoming more crowded as they take in refugees from neighboring villages that have fallen to darkness, and the stress of accommodating more people to protect and mouths to feed is worsening their tempers.

Spirits are at an all-time low with the murder of the mayor four months ago. The villagers stood frozen in fear as Voldaren vampires strolled into their village, murdered their mayor, and kidnapped Katarina (See "Background"). That event really drove home the knowledge that the people of Shadowgrange are truly helpless in the face of the horrors around them. Fear and shame have kept them from even clearing out the mayor's haunted house.

People feel a little resentment towards Thraben, the seat of the Avacynian Church. They believe the high priesthood isn't doing enough to protect Stensians, instead getting wealthy off tithes and living in safety behind Thraben's walls while places like Shadowgrange suffer.

Martial and magical prowess is highly prized in humanity's fight for survival. Villagers are initially wary of the characters but the adventurers quickly earn their respect and admiration if they prove to be protecting them -- clearing the haunted house, for example. Gruff "off you go then" goodbyes turn into "Avacyn's blessings upon you, heroes."

Town Description

Most of the villagers live on their farms outside of Shadowgrange's walls. The tradesfolk and wealthier citizens live inside. Each cottage is built around a hawthorn tree, with the tree's trunk in the center of the common room and its branches poke above the rooftop. This provides residents centralized access to living wood (APPENDIX A) as a defense against vampires. Every cottage also features a mirror on the outside of the front door to dissuade vampires from approaching, and often have prayers to Avacyn engraved on the door frame to repel evil spirits.

The following section detail specific locations in town.

Silver Rose Inn

Silver Rose Inn is a popular destination in the evening for villagers taking a break after a long day's work. Most folk head back home before nightfall, however, as the roads are far more dangerous once the sun goes down.

There are eight rooms available for rent. If the characters decide to stay here, see "Food, Drink, and Lodging" in the *Player's Handbook* for pricing (PHB 158).

The innkeeper, Eckhardt Sheck, is a former cathar (statted as a Neutral Good **thug** [MM 350]). Although in his mid 50's with thin greying blonde hair, he is remains an imposing figure; his thick, muscled, hairy arms look like they could snap a regular man in two, or at least they could if he had a right hand instead of a grasping hook -- he lost it fighting off a swarm of ghouls, nasty business. His permanent scowl and gruff attitude hides his kind heart.

If asked about Katarina Brunn, the artifact from the Avacynian Church, or Saint Traft's memorial, Eckhardt tells them to speak with priestess Flora at the village church, saying that she would know more about those things than anyone else.

Rumors. Spending a little time in the common room and chatting up the townspeople can provide the characters with a number of good leads to explore around the village. NPCs present in the Silver Rose Inn and the rumors they pass on include:

- Gerold, an old farmer: "Priestess Flora is still looking for tough folks to try and purge the spirits in the old mayor's house."
- Lena, a shepherd: "The hawthorne tree the alchemist shop is built around looks to be dying. Someone needs to check out what's killing it."
- Merle, a cathar: "I placed an order for a blessed silver longsword months ago. Marcus, the blacksmith, says there's a shortage though."
- Carsten, a priest: "Last week I prayed at Saint Traft's memorial in the chapel, and I swear by Avacyn's Light,



Map by Sean Ellison

I saw his spirit!"

- Martin, village idiot: "Old man Otto at Bountiful Heron General Store keeps complaining that there's no one to talk to about the 'R' canes. Where do you think those grow, anyway?"
- Helga, innkeeper's wife: "Silvia, the fletcher, told me yesterday she needs a certain type of wild herb, but she hasn't had the time to go get it."

These leads should point the characters toward opportunities for adventure in and around Shadowgrange.

Bountiful Heron General Store

Bountiful Heron is the biggest trading post in Shadowgrange. Its shelves are stocked with ordinary goods and supplies. Characters can buy adventuring gear here, with the exception of items worth over 25g. (For prices, see "Adventuring Gear" in the rulebook.) Characters in need of metal weapons or armor are pointed to The Tempered Bull, and ranged weapons or leathers inquiries are nudged towards Fleeting Fox Provisions (see their respective sections).

The owners are an old married couple, Otto and Magda Botler. They are kind to the characters, Magda often calling them "dear" or "sweetie." Otto sits behind the counter fussing over old scrolls and tomes of arcane knowledge. Magda works the counter, feebly moving over to get anything the characters ask for with trembling hands. Their feeble movements and kindness are a ruse, however. A DC 25 Wisdom (Insight) check notices that their actions aren't entirely sincere – Magda and Otto have honed their "kind old people" act for over a decade. If confronted about it, the couple tries to laugh it off, saying pretending to be feeble gets people to do things for them.

Otto and Magda are secretly two Skirsdag cultists. Magda is a **cult fanatic** (MM 345) and Otto a **mage** (MM 347). The two came to Shadowgrange to steal *Elbrus, the Binding*

Blade (APPENDIX A) from Saint Traft's Memorial. Now with the dagger in their possession, they work tirelessly to release the demon lord Withengar from the dagger. They recently made a trek outside of Shadowgrange to help perform a demon summoning ritual alongside fellow cultists (see "Explosive Summoning" in Chapter 1).

Arcane Appreciation. Otto takes special note of any character clearly showing arcane talents – casting an arcane spell, carrying an arcane spellbook, etc. Few folks around here have knowledge of the arcane, and Otto excitedly peppers the character(s) with questions about their background, studies, and goals in their pursuit of arcane knowledge. If the character is proficient with Intelligence (Arcane), allow him or her to roll an Arcane check during their talk with Otto, provided they are willing to answer his questions. On a result of 10 or higher, Otto gifts them a *scroll of comprehend languages*, saying that he hasn't had a use for it and hopes it may help the budding spellcaster; on a 15 or higher he is so impressed with the character's knowledge that he also gifts them a *scroll of burning hands* and a *scroll disguise self*.

An Innocent Gift. Otto and Magda know that *Elbrus, the Binding Blade* requires many souls to awaken Withengar. It would be very difficult to kill enough people to unleash the demon lord without blowing their cover. The adventurers arriving in town presents a unique opportunity to pass the blade off to professional killers that will surely fulfill the dagger's soul quota and unleash Withengar for them.

Otto will take any good opportunity to put Elbrus in the party's hands, either by initially offering to sell them it for 50 gp, or later by gifting the characters it after they aid the village in some significant way, such clearing out the mayor's house or helping the people during the zombie attack.

Elbrus takes the innocent looking form of the *Shapeshifter's Blade* (PICTURE). Otto describes it as a weapon that changes form based on the user's thoughts (which is true), and that he picked it up along his travels but never had a use for physical weapons (also true).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 200 XP equally among the characters if a party member talks arcane magics with lonely old Otto.

The Tempered Bull

Physical danger is a fact of life for Stensians, and most villagers have weapons ready to protect themselves from the creatures of darkness. Shadowgrange's forge runs hot from the crack of dawn until late into the night, smithing new weapons and repairing damaged ones.

Marcus Ritter, the head blacksmith, is busy tempering a blade, assisted by six apprentices. The black-haired, silver-eyed man is remarkably young for his position. An exceptional smith, his apprenticeship was cut short when the previous blacksmith was found burnt to a crisp; rumor has it that he cremated his late wife and she returned to take vengeance upon him as a fiery geist. Marcus was given the position shortly after.

Characters can buy metal arms and armor here. (For prices, see "Equipment" in the rulebook.)

Quest: Blessed Silver Shortage. Marcus used to create weapons of *blessed silver* (see APPENDIX A) with the help of the late mayor, Ralph Brunn. With his death months ago, however, no one else in the village knows the holy ritual to bless the silver as the weapons are being forged. Marcus has asked for help from Thraben but has received no response. Without new *blessed silver* weapons, the village is ill-prepared to defend themselves against supernatural horrors. The blacksmith asks if any of the characters know how to perform the ritual.

A character that has proficiency in Intelligence (Religion) can attempt a DC 15 check to see if they can perfectly recall the holy ritual. If they do, the character can assist Marcus in creating a batch of blessed weapons, which takes 10 hours uninterrupted.

If they are successful, Marcus gifts the character one of the weapons as thanks. The character can choose any metal weapon (see "Weapons" in the rulebook) as their gifted *blessed silver* weapon.

Characters can purchase additional *blessed silver weapons* for the standard price of silver weapons (weapon price + 100 gp for silver). Marcus is thankful for their help, but the blacksmith cannot give his weapon stock away for free, since this is the livelihood of him and his apprentices.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 200 XP equally among the characters if a party member helps Marcus craft blessed silver weapons.

Fleeting Fox Provisions

Three sisters, a fletcher named Silvia, a bowyer named Emma, and a leatherworker named Sybille, are co-owners of this shop. They keep the village's hunters armed and protected to venture into the dangerous wilderness.

Not only do they run the shop, but these sisters are also the most talented hunters in the village. The silver-haired women move with an uncanny grace, and despite their advanced age (all in their 50's), they retain the youthful appearance of women half their age. For these reasons, the trio have earned the nickname "Moontouched Sisters."

Characters can buy ranged weapons, ammo, and leather armors here. (For prices, see "Equipment" in the rulebook.)

Quest: Find the Lotus. Silvia asks that if the party finds

themselves in the farbog to the north, to keep an eye out for a plant called Sanguine Lotus. She has a recipe that uses the plant's flower to create a healing salve called *life's blood* (see APPENDIX A). The lotus only flowers for a few weeks this time of year, and she doesn't have the time to venture out and collect them herself. She will pay gold for them, along with some of the salve.

Characters proficient in Intelligence (Nature) will be prompted to make a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check while traveling through the farbog in Chapter 4. On success, they'll find sanguine lotus. If they characters bring the lotus back to Silvia, she will grind the flowers into *life's blood*, giving the party two vials of it along with 50 gp.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 200 XP equally among the characters if the party retrieves sanguine lotus for Silvia.

Visgaud Grounds

The sturdiest building in Shadowgrange is this old stone house built near the village gates. Visgaud Grounds serves as the town hall, courtroom jail, and Town Guard headquarters, housing twenty of the militia that protect the village (the rest have small cabins of their own in and around town).

Beside the building is the cathars' training grounds, where off-duty militia train on target dummies or in practice duels with wooden swords.

Captain Levi (PICTURE) (statted as a Lawful Good **thug** [MM 350]) is the leader of Shadowgrange's militia, being promoted to that position shortly after Katarina's kidnapping. A middle-aged veteran fighter trained in Elgaud Grounds in Nephalia, Levi is a strong and capable leader charged with protecting the village as best he can.

Alchemy Shop Investigation. Levi is aware that some townsfolk are concerned about the mysteriously dying hawthorn tree at the center of the abandoned alchemy shop. He considers it a nonissue and doesn't want to deal with it, arguing his time is better spent on more pressing issues, like training new recruits and other administration work. If a PC asks to investigate the shop, or if they have the deed to the shop, Levi is happy to let them check it out.



Armory

A small stone tower adjacent to Visgaurd Grounds, about 30 feet tall, the armory holds arms and armor for the town militia -- spears, light wooden shield, leather armor, studded leather amor, and a few old longswords and crossbows. Most of the arms have already been issued to the members of the militia.

An ancient hawthorn tree with an unusually thick trunk grows beside the armory. Villagers call it the Eldentree. The cathars maintain the tree and diligently carve the outline of stakes and spears into its trunk. In times of need, these weapons are cut out of the Eldentree, which function as weapons of *living wood* (APPENDIX A) for the next two days.

Chapel

Shadowgrange's chapel is the focal point of the village. Most villagers worship here several times per week, and many pass by the church on a daily basis for a blessing of safety. Mandatory tithes and payments for blessings keep the church's coffers always full.

Priestess Flora (PICTURE), a **priestess** (MM 348), oversees the day-to-day administration at the church with the help of a few lower-ranking clergy members. She is usually busy throughout the day, leading the morning and evening sermons, blessing the villagers, and performing divine rituals to reinforce Shadowgrange's protective wards. An old, oddly talkative woman, Flora stands out amongst the majority of Stensians by being outwardly warm and welcoming.

If asked about Katarina Brunn or the artifact, Flora will take the characters aside and tell them the story of what happened to the mayor's daughter -- paraphrase the information from "Background: Voldaren's Lesson," leaving out information about the artifact itself. She knows that Katarina was studying something of grave importance for the high priests, but she doesn't know what the artifact is, only that it would've been kept somewhere in the house.

Saint Traft's Memorial. Flora is happy to show Saint Traft's memorial to any inquiring character. She fondly recalls the saint's story; how he reached Sainthood in life, how even angels would fight under his command, and his heroic death single-handedly fighting cultists and the demon-lord Withengar to protect a single innocent life. (Saint Traft's entire story can be read here.)

Inside this small room is Saint Traft's memorial, dimly lift by dozens of wax candles. In the middle of the room is a statue of Saint Traft. He appears as a strong, valiant middle-aged man taking a knee in prayer while steadying a greatsword in hand. Soaring above him with outstretched feathery wings is an angel in a silken gown, holding an ornate spear high above her head as if to rally those that look up at her. A silver plaque at the base of the statue reads, "Here lies Saint Traft, champion of Avacyn, hero of Shadowgrange."

On the back wall of the room is a display case made of glass and iron, surrounded by etchings on the walls, hymns and prayers to Avacyn. Inside the case rests a bone dagger with black engravings along its blade. A small plaque on the case reads, "A hero's sacrifice: may the foul demon Withengar suffer for an eternity in this prison."

Saint Traft's restless spirit manifests throughout Stensia, protecting innocents and vanquishing fiends much as he did in life. The powerful aura of fate hanging onto the adventurers is likely to draw his attention.

The display case is locked; a DC 20 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) is required to open it. It is watched over by Flora, who replenishes the holy wards around it and keeps a permanent *Alarm* spell cast on the case to be alerted if anyone opens it. Flora does not permit anyone to touch the dagger, explaining that it holds the bound essence of the demon lord Withengar and is not something to be tampered with.

The dagger inside is *Elbrus, the Binding Blade* – or at least it was, until Otto and Magda Botler stole it and replaced it with a forgery (see "Bountiful Heron General Store"). It's such a convincing duplicate that Flora has never noticed the switch. The only big giveaway is that the duplicate is a mundane item, while the real thing radiates magic, something a character may notice with the *Detect Magic* spell or similar.

Quest: Saint Traft's Favor. Traft's spirit takes note of the adventurers when they visit his shrine. The spirit senses that these characters will play a pivotal role in restoring balance to the land and seeks to aid them. At some point later in the adventure of your choosing (perhaps after the siege of Chapter 3), Traft appears to one of the characters of your choice in their dream. The spirit chooses a character that pays respect at the shrine, or one that is most likely to wield a spear in battle, or that acts in a Lawful and/or Good manner. When that character next sleeps, read or paraphrase:

The spectral figure of a noble human approaches you in your dream. His blue wispy form is perpetually shifting, as if being buffeted by an unfelt breeze. The ghostly human's features matches exactly the statue of Saint Traft you saw before: it must be his spirit.

"I sense the heavy mantle of fate resting on the shoulders of you and your allies," the spirit in an oddly comforting tone, "you shall play a role in bringing balance to this world. Unfortunately, my hold on the mortal world is weak during these dark times, but I shall help you how



Art by Todd Lockwood

I can."

A statuesque angel in a silken gown lands beside you and hands you a silvery spear.

"This weapon shall aid you. Stay strong, traveler. We'll meet again."

Traft and the angel fade back into the darkness.

When the adventurer wakes up, they find the *moonsilver spear* (APPENDIX A) (PICTURE) from their dream gripped in hand.

Quest: Haunted House. If not approached with any hooks, Flora instead seeks out the characters herself. She has a job for them: rid the mayor's house of its evil presence. Regardless of how they solve the problem, Flora rewards them with 200 gp and, if they haven't been awarded possession of the alchemy shop already, she offers them to take anything they find in there.

Alchemist's Shop

Hanging above the front door of this small cabin is a wooden sign with a potion painted on it. Like most of the buildings here, a hawthorn tree pokes out of the cabin's roof in the center, but its barren branches and greying bark signals that it's dying.

This shop has been abandoned ever since its owner, the alchemist Siegfried Reinholdt, fled from the village after Katarina's kidnapping (see "Background" for details).

The shelves around the shop are stocked with alchemical reagents. Semi-precious gems, pickled animal body parts such as newt eyes, and many plants can be found here, though most of the once-live vegetation has withered and died due to months of neglect. In total, there's about 350 gp worth of alchemical materials that can be used for crafting potions (See "Crafting" in the rulebook).

Along the counter is a smattering of devices, among them ten empty vials and stoppers, a *herbalism kit*, and *alchemist's supplies*. (See "Tools" in the rulebook for their stats.)

Hanging on the back wall is a shelf with potions. Some of the liquids have expired, but there are four *vials of acid*, three *potions of healing*, and two *alchemist's fire*. (See "Adventuring Gear" in the rulebook for their stats.)

There is a fireplace with various iron mixing pots hanging over the pit. Inside one of the pots is a muddy liquid that has little bits of scales, pink flesh, a small claw, and hair. A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) reveals it to be a *potion of animal friendship* (DMG 187).

Developments

A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices some hastily concealed ashen footprints leading from the fireplace and out the door. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check examining the fireplace notices a hidden lever. Pulling the lever slides a hidden door in the fireplace, revealing a narrow spiraling staircase that leads to the Alchemist's Basement.

Alchemist's Basement

The hidden stone staircase is a short flight of stairs, revealing the alchemist shop's basement. It's pitch black here; the characters will need a light source or darkvision to see. Assuming vision, they see this:

The short flight of stairs ends just under the shop.The withering roots of the hawthorn tree takes up the center of the room and sprawls all across the floor. The roots are covered in vines and dead shrubbery.

Along the walls on both your sides are strange alchemical devices, glass bottles of various shapes and

sizes filled with strange liquids, tubes connecting them with each other and others burying themselves amid the tree's roots.

Beside the back wall is a wooden desk with piles of papers covering its surface along with a leather-bound book. Beside the desk is a humanoid figure laying down on a metal platform with dozens of utensils littering its sides.

That's no ordinary vegetation growing amongst the roots; it's actually comprised of **5 twig blights** and **1 vine blight** (MM 32). These plant monsters were part of Siegfried's experiments to create effective weapons against vampires, as they are, in a sense, walking *living wood* (see APPENDIX A).

The blights lay motionless on the ground, making them indistinguishible from normal vegetation. They patiently wait until the characters are distracted searching the room (or they're discovered) and then attack. The plants are hungry, having already devoured most of the nutrients from the hawthorn tree while locked down here, and fight until destroyed.

Developments

A leather-bound book rests on the desk; Siegfried's journal. The entries describe his love of his Stensian countrymen, praising their bravery and perserverence. and above all, his love of Katarina, the light of his life. He outlines dozens of plans to protect his people from the horrors of the night, especially from the horrible vampires that prey on humanity like cattle. Siegfried devoted his life to this endeavor, discarding what didn't work and always trying out new ideas. The final entries note Siegfried's increasingly desperate situation now that Avacyn disappeared and her protective magics fail; the horrors grow bolder and more of his people die. He ultimately resolves to pursue the foul "art" of necro-alchemy, believing it to be a necessary evil to protect his loved ones.

The desk is covered with a seemingly endless amount of pages discussing necro-alchemy; the art of creating undead abominations called "skaabs." Standing out amongst the notes is one opened letter (APPENDIX C). The letter is encoded: deciphering the requires Letter Frequency Analysis to break the code; for example, wherever the letter "z" appears it should be replaced with the letter "a," replacing each letter this way reveals the hidden message. You can run this puzzle multiple ways:

- The players figure out and translate the entire letter themselves
- The players figure out and translate a portion of the letter, then hand them the fully decoded version
- Let the characters make an Intelligence (Investigation) DC 15 check to crack the code

The letter is written by Siegfried's cousin, a man that goes by "Stitcher Geralf." The cousin voices his support of Siegfried's decision to finally study necro-alchemy and suggests he move his operations to a place called Mauer Estate.

On the metal platform rests a well-preserved human corpse -- or rather, many pieces of human corpses stitched together. Copper plates with silver-inlaid runes scribed on them have been woven into the creature, the rune-bonds used to join the various anatomical features. The strange liquid in most of the glass bottles is the vital fluid, the "blood" of the skaab, made of lamp oil with a pinch of angel blood. Siegfried had this test skaab properly built, but he never uttered the incantation to awaken it.

Treasure

Sitting in a corner of the basement is an *alchemy jug* (DMG 150). Siegfried used the jug to produce the oil needed for the skaab's vital fluid.

The various necro-alchemical equipment that Siegfried amassed in the basement could be worth 500 gp to fellow stitchers, but commoners and members of the Church of Avacyn would be hostile to anyone found carrying such items.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 325 XP equally among the characters if the party destroys the blights.

Mayor's House

The mayor's house is a one of the larger and more comfortable homes in the village. The two-story building is built atop a small hill not far from the chapel and has a large hawthorn tree sticking up through its roof.

The house seems ordinary enough until you come close and notice that the mirror placed on the wooden door has been shattered. Holy protection prayers to Avacyn engraved on the door frame have been scratched out with a blade, and the door is slightly ajar. The square-framed windows reveal nothing on the inside; the house is pitch black.

A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices about a dozen humanoid footprints moving to and from the entrance. The vampires smashed the mirror and scratched out the holy wards before entering the house.

A dark presence has gripped the house ever since the night the vampires attacked (see "Background: Voldaren's Lesson").

Magical Darkness. The insides of the house is enveloped in a pitch-black magical darkness that functions as the *Darkness* spell, except that light sources do work to an

extent, offering dim light within a radius of 15ft. – beyond that is total darkness. If the darkness is dispelled, by *Daylight* or something else, it returns 1d6 rounds later.

Spooky Stuff. In addition to the magical darkness, feel free to add any flourishes to this haunted house as you see fit. For example, a wall may suddenly begin to bleed, the eyes of portraits may follow the PCs, a random PC might hear voices or see figures for a brief moment before they disappear. Have fun with it!

The Restless Spirit

The late mayor's restless spirit now haunts the house as a **poltergeist** (MM 279). Putting him to rest is the only way to rid of the house's haunting.

Ralph senses the character's intrusion and stalks them as they explore the house. Though he moves in complete silence and is permanently invisible, the characters feel his presense; the air grows cold, a chill runs up their spine, and they feel they're being watched.

Ralph will make his displeasure known if the party attempts to loot or otherwise disrespect his home by telekintetically shaking or throwing furniture.

Characters can possibly avoid the spirit's ire by convincing Ralph that they are trying to help. By explaining that they're here on behalf of the Church, or that they want to help the people of Shadowgrange, or other compelling arguments that they can think of, they may be able to get Ralph's spirit to back down and maybe even stop haunting the house. If they make a reasonable argument, allow a character to make a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to get Ralph to back down.

Spooky Mirrors. While Ralph is permanently invisible to the naked eye as a poltgergeist, his spectral reflection still appears in the dozens of mirrors littering the walls (PICTURE).

Ground Floor

Inside, assuming the characters have a light source:

Shards of glass and dried blood litter the entryway floor. A hallway leads to two rooms ahead. A bloody handprint trails along the wall out of the closest room and onto the staircase's handrail, which spirals up around the large hawthorn tree growing in the center of the house and up to the second floor.

The two rooms on the main floor are the kitchen in the back and the common room. The kitchen has been untouched, but the common room is (quite literally) a bloody mess. There are clear signs of battle such as slashed furniture and scorch marks. Blood splatters cover the walls and ceilings. It was here the vampires clashed with Ralph and Katarina.

Slumped beside one of the walls is the decaying corpse of Ralph Brunn, the source of all the blood. The vampires had some "fun" with him. The mayor's body still wears his *mithral chain shirt* (DMG 187) underneath his clothes -- not that it helped him in the end.

Second Floor

The staircase leads up to the second floor. The hallway to the right leads to two bedrooms: Ralph's and Katarina's. To the left is the music room, where the hand-smeared trail of blood leads to.

Ralph's bedroom has everything you'd expect in a well-off village leader's room. Underneath his bed is a sturdy, unlocked wooden chest holding some emergency savings. It contains 60 sp, 40 gp, and a silk pouch containing five tiger eyes (10 gp each) and two moonstones (50 gp each). Amongst the nice variety of clothing in his closet are two pairs of priestly cloth-of-gold vestments with Avacyn's Collar embroidered on the front and back, each worth 25 gp.

Katarina's bedroom is also fairly mundane. Her wardrobe contains a set of battle-worn cathar leathers, the uniform of holy warriors of the Church of Avacyn and functions as *studded leather* (see "Armor" in the rule book). Unlike her father, Katarina's closet lacks an array of regal clothing; she was more interested in fighting and doing in practical clothing instead of playing politics in pretty dresses.

There is an unsealed letter tucked into a book on Katarina's desk, which can be found with a thorough search of the room and a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The letter is written by her and is addressed to her uncle, Hanns Reinhart. In it, Katarina begs her uncle to come to Shadowgrange at once, as she needs his expertise on silver and the moon to unlock a puzzle of "great importance." Apparrently Hanns has disappeared for years now, but Katarina is convinced that he is still alive somewhere, and this letter is the last of many sent to all the safe houses of his that Katarina knows of.

Music Room

The hallway opens up into a large ornate room with an arched ceiling. Paintings line the wall, along with smashed mirrors. In each corner of the room are instruments: a piano with a pile of sheet music placed on it, a violin on a stand, a harp, and a bloody flute on the floor next to a knocked over music stand.

There are a few music instruments in this room: a piano, a bloody flute, a harp, and a *violin of banishing light* (see APPENDIX A).

There are also three paintings: one depicts a canary sitting in a rusted bird cage beside a locked chest, another shows a flight of angels driving back demons emerging from a fiery chasm, and the last one is a portrait of a regal looking man with a handlebar mustache; Bernard Brunn, grandfather of Ralph Brunn.

After messily murdering Ralph, a few vampires sauntered upstairs for a little entertainment. The bloody-handed vampire played on the flute for a bit before they got bored and left. They also smashed the mirrors so they didn't have to look at their own monstrous reflections.

Music Puzzle

The following is a puzzle using sheet music (APPENDIX C) as props. You can run the puzzle multiple ways:

If a a player can read sheet music, let them figure it out

- Bard characters can automatically read sheet music
- Characters proficient in a musical instrument can automatically read sheet music
- Silvia, the fletcher at Fleeting Fox Provisions, is known in town to be a talented violinist. If the characters ask around for someone that can read sheet music, they are pointed to her.

The piles of sheet music on the piano are mostly of popular songs known to Innistrad natives, but a thorough search of the room and an Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 15 notices that two sheets of music buried in piles of paper stand out from the rest. Both have been hurriedly written on with ink (Katarina wrote on them right before the impending vampire attack). One says "READ," the other says "PLAY." Neither of them are songs that a local would recognize. See APPENDIX C for copies of the sheets.

The "PLAY" sheet has a song on it that wants to be played. Any song will do, but the song used during this adventure's playtest was Pan's Labyrinth: Lullaby. If anyone starts playing the song, either on an instrument, singing, or humming, characters feel a sudden compulsion to pick up the *violin of banishing light*. If they do, they find out that they can play the song even if they have no experience with a violin before. Playing the song activates the violin's magical properties (see APPENDIX A) (PICTURE), flooding the room with light as the *Daylight* spell, and driving back the darkness. The *Daylight* spell ends as soon as the character stops playing.

The "READ" sheet has music notes that, when you look at the corresponding letters, spell out "AGED CAGE". One of the paintings on the wall is of a canary sitting in a rusted bird cage – an aged cage. Saying, "aged cage," out loud opens the chest in the painting with an audible creak. Once opened, a character can reach into the painting (which now acts as a portal to a tiny pocket plane) and retrieve from the chest the *Strionic Resonator*. The artifact is not whole: the tuning fork is missing one of its prongs (tines). It was cleanly removed; Katarina gave the piece to Siegfried for safekeeping the night the vampires attacked, gambling that the Voldarens may find one piece, but not both.

Developments

When Ralph's ghost is either destroyed or appeased, the darkness shrouding the house disappears. Priestess Flora happily pays the party what they're owed (see "Chapel") and gives them the key to the alchemist's shop.

Word quickly spreads throughout the village of the party's deeds. Villagers will be much friendlier to the characters, thankful to have strong adventurers in their midst during these bleak times.

None of the villagers know what the artifact is, other than pointing out that it looks like a tuning fork with a piece missing. Flora knows that Katarina was experimenting with something on behalf of the Church, and that the only other people that may have known about it would be her father, Ralph (dead), and her fiancee, Siegfried (fled).

If the characters aren't tight-lipped about the artifact, word about it could spread and may catch the attention of dangerous folk (the Skirsdag or worse) that would be more than happy to "relieve" the adventurers of their new-found item.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 450 XP equally among the characters if the party deals with Ralph's spirit.

Divide 1,250 XP equally among the characters if the party recovers the *Strionic Resonator*.

Conclusion of Part 2

Part 3 begins after the adventurers retrieve the Strionic Resonator. You may choose to delay Part 3 if the adventurers still intend to explore the town further, as this may be their final opportunity to do so.

Milestone: Level 3!

If you are using Milestone Experience, then the characters attain 3rd level as you move to Part 3.



Art by Peter Mohrbacher

Part 3: Night of the Dead

This chapter begins shortly after the adventurers find the *Strionic Resonator* in the previous chapter. If the players do not have any intention of locating the artifact, or they still have other intended goals in town, you may choose to start this chapter after the players have had sufficient time to rest, explore Shadowgrange, and restock on supplies.

Undead Menace

Events are unfolding beyond the scope of the characters' activities: an army of undead are currently on a murderous rampage, laying waste to all the settlements in their way. Shadowgrange is their ultimate target.

The Horde's Purpose

The army is a mad project crafted by Siegfried, an alchemist that formerly called Shadowgrange his beloved home. Siegfried had devoted his life to defending the village from the horrors that stalk Stensia; most of all, the vampires that kidnapped his neighbours for leisurely meals. Together with his like-minded fiancée, Katarina Brunn, they tried to rally the people to fight back and strengthen their defenses. But with Avacyn's disappearance and the protective wards surrounding the village failing, Siegfried became more and more desperate for answers to save his people.

Three years ago, Siegfried finally acquiesced to his cousin, Geralf's, suggestion: he began to study necro-alchemy, the foul art of bestowing life into stitched together corpses to create unholy abominations called skaabs. The alchemist perfected his craft in secret underneath his shop, waiting for the day that he could drive back the vampire threat with his stitched army.

When the Voldaren vampires came, murdered the mayor Ralph and kidnapped Katarina, something inside Siegfried snapped. He vowed revenge not only upon the accursed vampires that killed his beloved, but also the cowardly villagers that stood idly as it all happened.

The alchemist fled from his home and traveled north to the abandoned Mauer Estate, where he's been working tirelessly to make his dreams of vengeance a reality.

To defeat his hated vampire foes, Siegfried needs bodies. Lots of them. To this end, the alchemist has teamed up with a young necromancer named Rinelda Smitt. Together, they've raised a zombie horde to ravage the countryside. Rinelda leads the horde, destroying all settlements in her way and sending the corpses of her victims back to Mauer Estate, where Siegfried uses them to construct abominations to challenge the Voldaren vampires. In his twisted mind, the alchemist believes this a fitting end for his fellow countrymen, as their cowardly betrayal in life will be redeemed when they serve him in death.

Refugees

Word quickly spreads in Shadowgrange that a large group of refugees have arrived from a neighbouring settlement. A group of cathars meets them at the village gate and escorts them to the marketplace, where priests from the chapel (including Flora) arrive to help treat the wounded. Cathars and curious villagers alike crowd around the refugees to find out what happened.

The refugees hail from Mordov, a settlement one day north of Shadowgrange. Yesterday, Mordov was attacked by an army of walking dead – these twenty-six refugees are the only ones that managed to escape. The refugees distanced themselves from the zombie horde with their three carriages and horses.

If the characters interview the survivors and voice any of the following statements or questions, the refugees respond as indicated:

- *What happened?* A fog rolled in from the farbog north of Mordov. It was thicker than usual and carried a stiff chill. Many in town knew it to be a bad omen. They were right. Next we heard the screams. The restless dead were upon us. The shambling remains of folk like you and me attacked the living, biting, tearing... Avacyn protect us!

- *How'd you escape?* Us few that survived were the lucky ones standing near the stables when the undead attacked. We took any horses still there, along with the carriages, and rounded up as many folk as we could. Then we made a blind ride out into the fog. Many of us didn't make it...

- *What attacked your village?* The walking dead. Corpses that should be in the ground, peaceful in the Blessed Sleep. They shambled towards us with pitiless eyes. All they wanted to do was tear us apart. Cared for nothing else.

- *How many are there?* It was impossible to tell when the attack happened. One moment a fog rolled in, the next they were everywhere. But we saw them again across the valley as we fled. Hundreds of them, definitely.

- *Where did they come from?* When we saw them, they already were all around us. But all the walking dead had dried mud up to their waists. You get muddy like that from walking through the farbog (swamp) north of Mordov, so I reckon that's where they came from.

- *Was it just zombies?* No. It was mostly undead villagers, but I caught a glimpse of two hulking monstrosities lumbering about. They were twice my height and had the strength of ten men – in fact, judging by the number of arms sticking out of the creatures, they very well could've been made of ten men! The abominations were smashing down doors and swatting away cathars like flies. But the worst thing I saw was a human walking amongst these brutes. A teenaged girl chanting and waving a symbol around – I don't know what it was. She was laughing and prancing around as we were being slaughtered left and right. Laughing! It must've been one of those vile necromancers that command the dead. How could something so young be so wicked?

- *Did you see Siegfried?* A man by that name came through our village a few months ago. He was in a foul mood and avoided small talk. He rested, stocked up on supplies, and then headed into the farbog to the north, despite us telling him it was a suicidie mission. Never heard anything of him since then.

Developments

The refugees have more dire news for the crowd around them: as they fled, the survivors saw brief glimpses of the horde beginning to move south, in the direction of Shadowgrange. At the rate they were moving, they'd reach this village in two days.

Panic ensues when this information is revealed. Stensians are stoic folk and dealing with horrors is a grim fact of life, but an entire horde of undead bent on their annihilation isn't something they've ever had to face before. The cathars do their best to maintain order amongst the crowd.

Once she hears about the impending attack, priestess Flora seeks out the adventurers. A meeting of the village leaders is to be called immediately and she asks for the characters to join them.



Captain Levi stands ready to defend Shadowgrange and its people.

Ill Tidings

With rumors of an undead horde approaching, the leaders of Shadowgrange call a council meeting to determine what should be done. As the most capable adventurers in town, the PCs are invited.

Priestess Flora summons the adventurers to thw town hall at the Visgaud Grounds, where Eckhardt Sheckt (proprieter of the Silver Rose Inn and retired cathar) and Captain Levi (leader of the village militia) are waiting.

You are all gathered in the town hall. Here with you are Eckhardt, the owner of Silver Rose inn; and Captain Levi, leader of Shadowgrange's local cathars. Along with Priestess Flora, these people comprise the Town Council.

"Well, you all know why we're here," Flora says without preamble. "If what these refugees say is true, there's a horde of undead rampaging through the countryside and they'll be here in a matter of days. We must figure out what is to be done."

There are two main options to discuss: defend the town or evacuate.

If they defend the town, Captain Levi has 40 cathars under his command and believes he can conscript an additional 100 townsfolk (hunters, farmers, tradesfolk) of varying combat prowess. Priestess Flora and her ten clergy members can provide divine support to the troops, and she can call up ten trained bowyers (the Moontouched Sisters and others) to fight as well.

If they evacuate, there are smaller settlements south of Shadowgrange within a day's journey. The next biggest settlement is the rancher community called Lammas, two days away. Finally, the greatest military strength nearby is Silbern, a small community built around Silbern Tower. This tower is a lodging and base of operations for a group of cathars called the Silbern Guard, about a hundred

trained fighters. Silbern is three days away to the east.

These are the two options that the council members will argue for, but the characters can come up with different ideas as well.

This is a chance for the players to throw in their own advice about how Shadowgrange should meet the threat. The council members have their own opinions.

Eckhardt: Grim. A seasoned ex-cathar himself, Eckhardt has his doubts that the village walls can hold, and once they're breached, the zombies would easily overrun the village. He advocates evacuation. "We don't have enough cathars to hold off a zombie horde. We need to start evacuating the village and get the people south."

Levi: Also grim, but more optimistic. Levi points out that the roads south are narrow and dangerous. Trying to protect a thousand evacuating villagers would be next to impossible and there will bound to be casualties. He advocates defending the village. "The gates and walls will hold. If the undead cannot breach out defense, their superior numbers will mean nothing."

Flora: Stubborn and fatalistic. Flora sees abandoning the village as an ultimate failure. Countless generations are buried in the village crypt, resting eternally in The Blessed Sleep, and they cannot be forsaken. She advocates fighting to the bitter end if need be. "Our destiny is in Avacyn's hands. She would not want us to abandon our ancestors."

This is an encounter best resolved through roleplaying. Let the characters argue their case for whichever response they favor. If you feel they have argued persuasively, their position should carry the day.

Since the characters are probably arguing for a position favored by at least one of the council members, all they really need to do is convince the ones that disagree.

Developments

Once the council has settled on a decision, they quickly go about relaying orders. If the town is to be defended, skip down to "Defending Shadowgrange." For details to evacuate, go to "Evacuation."

Hours after the council meeting begins, the scouting group led by Silvia confirms that the zombie horde is indeed traveling towards Shadowgrange from the north. It is comprised of about four hundred zombies, three large stitched abominations, two dozen skeletons, and a female human that seems to be herding them. At their pace, the horde should arrive in two days.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 600 XP equally among the characters if the party succeeds in persuading the council to adopt their preferred course of action.

Attacking the Horde

Bringing the fight to the undead horde would be suicidal. In total, the horde is comprised of 400 zombies, 20 skeletons, 3 skaab goliaths, and a necromancer. The adventurers and any of the townsfolk they'd bring with them would be greatly outnumbered. The only chance of victory in battle is to fight them atop Shadowgrange's walls, where the defenders can utilize their ranged advantage while the horde is kept at bay.

The characters can employ hit-and-run tactics while the horde travels, however. Executed properly, it can wittle away their numbers before the real engagement at Shadowgrange. But make sure to emphasize the sheer magnitude of undead moving together, so the characters are well aware that attacking head-on would be incredibly foolish and lethal.

Adventurers leaving immediately northward can easily find the advancing horde within a day's journey (the horde moves slowly as a group, moving at half the speed of traveling adventurers). Riding horses will shave off a few more hours of travel time.

The horde moves as a loosely organized group herded in the right direction by Rinelda Smitt, a necromancer that stays in the center of the group. Five large wooden wagons are pulled along with the horde by zombies, which are used to collect corpses to send back to Mauer Estate.

This horde isn't so much an "army" as an abnormally large group of undead wandering in the same direction. They do not have formations or follow complex tactics. Any undead that spots the adventurers will instinctively attack. If they lose sight of the adventurers, or if they stray too far from the herd, they head back.

Attacking outlying zombies causes some of the closest undead to take notice. If they spot the assailants, the zombies shamble forward to attack. This triggers a domino effect as more and more undead notice what's going on and join the battle.

The horde comes in waves, with the first wave representing outlier zombies furthest from the horde's center and moves to involve higher concentrations of undead more central to the horde until you get to the fifth wave, the center of the horde where Rinelda resides. The necromancer is nearly impossible to spot in the crowd. When a wave joins the battle, the following wave joins 1d6+2 rounds after.

First Wave

3 zombies (MM 316) (PICTURE) rush forward to attack the characters closest to them. They start by grappling the target. If the target is grappled, they use their slam attack.

Second Wave

4 zombies arrive using the same tactics as above, along with **1 skeleton** (MM 272)that hangs back and fires with its shortbow.

Third Wave

8 zombies from deeper inside the horde join the fray, along with **2 skeletons**. Same tactics as above.

Fourth Wave

13 zombies, **1 skeleton**, and **1 skaab goliath** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE). Same tactics as above, while the goliath wades into battle swinging its morningstar. This is close to the horde's center.

Fifth Wave

20 zombies, **5 skeletons**, **2 skaab goliaths**, and **Rinelda Smitt** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE). This is the horde's center.

Same tactics as above. Rinelda tries to stay out of melee. She prefers to first cast *spiritual weapon* and *sacred flame* on her first turn, and on the following turn try to disable the most threatening adventurer with *hold person*. If pressed into melee, she casts *inflict wounds*.

Developments

Deduct any destroyed undead from the horde's total. Write down which undead were destroyed so you can update the horde's numbers in the upcoming siege.

If at any point the characters flee, the undead chase for a few rounds before returning to their previous position.

If Rinelda is defeated, the horde carry out their last command and still march in the direction of Shadowgrange, but fifty zombies wander the wrong way and are deducted from the horde's total.

Rinelda Smitt insane. The teen lost her parents at a very young age and has survived in the wilderness purely off her talents in necromancy. She is devoid of empathy for her victims, seeing humans as useful only as resources to raid for food, clothing, shelter, and their corpses for undead. The only thing she understands and respects is power. If her life is on the line, she'll explain her partnership with Siegfried, and how she's culling the land to bring him corpses for his experiments (see "The Horde's Purpose"). Rinelda respects Siegfried's talents and hopes to learn everything she can as his apprentice before inevitably murdering him and taking over his residence.

Rinelda carries basic necessities (clothing, food) along with a *ghoulcaller's bell* (APPENDIX A) (PICTURE), and a large pouch containing 90 ep and 70 gp. On her person is a note written by Siegfried, reminding the teen to collect everything she can find in his shop's basement, from papers to alchemical supplies.



Art by John Stanko

Defending Shadowgrange

If the characters choose to defend the town, they can spend the time before the horde arrives by preparing the town's defenses. Let the characters lead the discussion on what to do during this time. The council members respect the opinions of capable adventurers, especially when it comes to battle, and they'll follow the party's initiative for planning.

Adventurers are a delightfully creative and unpredictable bunch and you should encourage their plans if reasonable. Reward good planning, whatever it may be. In addition to the character's ideas, the council members also voice opinions on what to do. These preparation quests will yield benefits in the battle to come (see "Running the Siege"):

- ***Warding the Walls.*** Priestess Flora thinks she can re-ignite the holy wards that used to protect Shadowgrange's walls, but she'll need help doing so. Any character with proficiency in Intelligence (Religion) can choose to aid her in performing the holy rituals to infuse the walls with holy energy. If at least one character does, Flora and that character can re-arm the wards by spending eight hours devoted to carrying out the ritual. Each additional character aiding in the ritual reduces the time required by four hours. *On success:* The walls radiate a faint divine magic. Lesser undead, such as zombies and skeletons, are repelled from getting too close, and the skaab goliaths in "Assault on the Gate" scenario take longer

to destroy the gate.

- ***Finding Runners.*** Captain Levi suggests finding suitable messengers amongst the conscripted townsfolk to relay information between the characters and council members. This way they can better coordinate their defences during the battle. Any character can approach a townsperson to be a runner. Convincing a person to take the job requires a Charisma (Diplomacy) check DC 10. *On success:* The characters have messengers to keep them informed of how the battle progresses. In the "Defending the Breach" scenario, they characters can arrive earlier, saving more defenders and are rewarded with an additional influence dice.
- ***Boosting Morale.*** Eckhardt Sheck knows that the conscripted townsfolk are terrified of the approaching horde. These people are not fighters; they are farmers, shepherds, and tradesmen. They need a confidence boost to have them perform well in battle. Any character can try to raise the hopes of the conscripted townsfolk. They can do so in numerous ways, from a rousing speech, playing up the strengths of the adventurers, showing the commoners how to properly wield their weapons, squashing any talks of hopelessness, or any other reasonable idea the characters come up with. An appropriate skill check DC 15 inspires confidence in the conscripts witnessing this. *On success:* Defenders that witness the character's actions are inspired, fighting more effectively in the siege, dealing more damage to the skaab goliaths in the "Assault on the Gate" scenario.
- ***More Conscripts.*** Captain Levi points out that the undead horde still greatly outnumber the defenders. To help increase the chances of survival, a weapon should be put into the hands of any person that can hold it. Levi suggests more aggressively conscripting any person able to wield a weapon, including children and the elderly. It will take convincing on the part of the characters to make this happen, however, as parents will be reluctant to send their young ones to battle. As in the "Boosting Morale" quest, the characters can be creative with their ways and pass an appropriate skill DC to conscript the children and elderly. *On success:* The characters can conscript up to 50 additional young and elderly commoners. These commoners help deal additional damage to the skaab goliaths in the "Assault on the Gate" scenario.

Add any other quests that you feel are appropriate to the situation.

As the characters go about preparing, so do the rest of the townsfolk. Shadowgrange's cathars calls upon all able-bodied citizens to take up arms against the oncoming attack. These conscripted commoners gather in the town square bringing whatever weapons they have, from hunting bows to pitchforks, where they await orders.



Art by David Palumbo

The rest of the townsfolk rush to evacuate precious belongings from their outlying homes and farms to the safety of Shadowgrange's walls. Noncombatants are squeezed into the town chapel, which is reinforced with makeshift barricades.

Once the civilians are accounted for, the cathars and conscripted soldiers will work day and night to reinforce the gate and build makeshift barricades along the main path leading to the market square.

Free Pots. The clergy members seek out the adventurers. They are well aware that the characters' prowess will play a critical factor in defending the town, so they give them four *healing potions* for the fight.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 900 XP equally among the characters if the party aids the town in preparing defenses.

Evacuation?

This adventure assumes most parties will decide to stand their ground and defend Shadowgrange. However, they can choose to flee from the oncoming undead horde. Or perhaps they evacuate the town, lure the undead inside, and then set the place on fire, destroying both the town but also the horde if done correctly. There is no "wrong" way to attack this problem.

Should the characters choose to flee or evacuate, there are a few settlements not far from Shadowgrange that they can travel to. None have the defensible stone walls of Shadowgrange, but all are encircled by a moat and some sort of physical barrier, such as wooden palisades or at the very least somewhat defensible trenches. The closest settlement is a day away.

There are two notable settlements fairly close to Shadowgrange. The first is Lammas, a rancher community stable village two days away. The second is Silbern, a

small community built around Silbern Tower, a lodging and base of operations for a local group of cathars called the Silbern Guard. Three days away, this community has the largest concentration of cathars in Stensia, with a little over a hundred trained fighters ready to take up arms.

It's dangerous to travel through Stensia, as the adventurers probably know already. You may wish to run some of the random encounters from Part 1 while the characters travel to other settlements. Lesser undead, fiends, beasts, and bandits roam preying on travelers.

The zombie horde is on a rampage through the entire countryside. Their sole purpose is to slay the living and return the corpses back to Siegfried in Mauer Estate. If the characters retreat from Shadowgrange, the horde continues moving south, slaughtering all communities along the way. Any settlement in the outland valleys of Stensia will be attacked eventually. Maybe the adventurers team up with the Silbern Guard and take on the horde at a different location. Roll with the player's ideas and it will all work out in the end.

Running the Siege

An undead army marches on Shadowgrange and its defenders are prepared to meet them in battle. Keeping track of hundreds of combatants, including their individual stats and rolls, would be impossible. Instead, it's recommended to run the siege by keeping the adventures and their personal action as the focus like any other battle, with the greater battle around them being told mostly through story rather than dice rolls.

With this method, the battle rages on as a backdrop: the focus is on the fight between the characters and their enemies. The larger conflict takes place "offstage," and is only relevant to the extent that it helps or hinders the characters.

The adventurers will act as Shadowgrange's elite defense unit in the battle, sent to deal with the toughest, most dangerous missions. The result of these missions will determine the ultimate fate of Shadowgrange itself.

Don't bother tracking the hit points of the various combatants, except the ones the adventurers are actively fighting. Just describe the carnage as the defenders and horde battle it out, while the characters take on the toughest part of the enemy forces. A short sentence or



Art by Ryan Pancoast

two at the end of a round or the end of a battle is great to maintain the players' awareness of the ongoing battle around them and keeps them immersed.

Thinning the Numbers

If the PCs destroyed some of the advancing horde in "Attacking the Horde" or otherwise, deduct the destroyed creatures from the horde's total numbers here. If the adventurers destroyed any of the three skaab goliaths, some of the following encounters need to be changed:

- If one goliath was destroyed prior to the siege, then there is no goliath present at the "Defending the Breach" battle, making it much easier.
- Any additional skaab goliaths destroyed prior to the siege (up to three) are subtracted from the "Assault on the Gate" battle, which gives a huge advantage to hold the gate.

Horde Tactics

The undead horde's attack comes during the dead of night, where they can take advantage of their darkvision. Shadowgrange's defenders have at least the light of the stars and the moon to see by, along with torches lining their walls to illuminate anyone beside their defenses. The attack is led by Rinelda Smitt, a necromancer herding the horde towards Shadowgrange.

The horde's attack is organized into stages, detailed below. The actions of the characters can disrupt these stages; they are presented here as they would play out if the characters weren't on hand to aid in Shadowgrange's defense.

Stage 1: The undead horde advances on Shadowgrange. The majority of zombies, led by two skaabs, shambles forward to break down the gate, while skeleton archers fire at any defenders they see.

Stage 2: A secondary force of undead attacks led by one skaab breaches the wall, away from the main fighting at the gate.

Stage 3: Swarms of undead pour through gaps in the city defenses created by the skaabs and begin wreaking havoc.

Stage 4: The undead horde fully enters Shadowgrange, routing the defenders to the chapel.

Stage 5: Rinelda Smitt personally leads an assault on the chapel, looking to finish off the remaining defenders.

Assault on the Gate

The horde are traversing the valley and approaching Shadowgrange. It's night, and none of the defenders (except maybe an adventurer) has darkvision to see. Unless the adventurers are attacking, or have provided the other defenders a way to see the approaching horde, Captain Levi orders his crossbowmen and archers to hold fire until they can get a clear shot.

If the adventurers ride out to attack the approaching horde, use the stats given in "Attacking the Horde" section earlier.

When the horde (PICTURE) arrives at the walls, read or paraphrase:

They arrive in the dead of night: hundreds of shambling humanoids. In the moonlight, their figures silhouettes can be seen, along with glimpses of their rotted faces. As they near the walls, torches illuminate their hideous appearances. The zombies move towards Shadowgrange with a strange urgency; splashing and flailing in the moat's waters, scrambling over each other to reach the walls, lashing at the gate, tearing, ripping, growling.

Lumbering forward, towering over the other zombies, are two stitched abominations. Six powerful arms and three heads are attached to each mass of muscle. These creatures stride easily through the moat's waters and move towards Shadowgrange's gates, where they start start pummeling it with armor-plated fists, shaking the barricade with each blow. Captain Levi begins to yell and wave a torch to get attention. "Bowmen! Take out those beasts! Now!"

2 skaab goliaths (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE) begin leading the attack on the gate. They smash the gate each round, unless something prevents them from doing so. The gate can take 10 hits (or 5 rounds of both hitting) total from the skaabs before being breached. Captain Levi is aware of the danger they pose and barks out orders to take them down. If the adventurers completed the quest "Warding the Walls," the gate instead can take 12 hits total before being breached.

The defenders on the walls begin raining down crossbow bolts and arrows upon the goliaths, dealing 22 damage per round divided between the two goliaths unless specifically told to aim at one. If the adventurers completed the quest "Boosting Morale" or "More Conscripts," the damage per round is increased by 4 per quest completed.

To make matters worse, as the order is given to bring down the goliaths, screams can be heard from atop the walls. **20 skeleton archers** (MM 272) pepper the bowmen atop the walls, using their darkvision to fire from 40 feet away. The constant barrage hampers the defender's ability to take down the goliaths.

For every five skeletons the adventurers take out, the defending bowmen can fire more freely, increase their

damage on the goliaths by +2 each round.

Developments

If the skaab goliaths are taken out before the gate is breached by them, then the gate holds. Regular zombies stumble over the fallen goliaths to claw at the gate, but their assault is far weaker than the skaab's.

If the gate is breached, all is not lost. Eckhardt and his soldiers, a mix of cathars and conscripts, stand ready to meet the surge of undead that rush through the broken gate. Their goal is to drive the undead back long enough to repair the broken gate.

Regardless of the outcome, a messenger runs over to the adventurers shortly after either the gate is saved/breached. The bloodied soldier comes bearing grim news: one of the far side walls have been breached. The undead are breaking through, and her squadron of soldiers have been taking heavy losses trying to hold their position. Captain Levi will ask the adventurers to reinforce the breach.

If the adventurers completed the quest "Finding Runners," the messenger is one of the people the characters enlisted as a runner, and they're given an earlier warning that a wall is soon to be breached.

Defending the Breach

The undead have breached one of the walls and have begun pouring in. Without the adventurers intervening at the breach, that position will almost assuredly be overrun. If the gate has been breached and the adventurers decide to defend it instead, you can configure the following encounter to work for that too.

Once the adventurers arrive at the breach, read or paraphrase:

The warm glow of fire can be seen over the rooftops ahead of you, where the sounds of fighting can be heard. As you turn the corner, you see two wooden cabins aflame next to the wall, illuminating the scene in front of you. Fighting amidst the bright glow in a tight formation are the cathars, clashing with dozens of undead humanoids. More still



Art by Volkan Baga



Art by Raymond Swanland

pour into the street from a breach in the wall 10 feet wide, clambering over the stone debris and eagerly rushing to the living defenders. "By Avacyn's Might, we hold!" shouts a cathar, even as the soldiers are slowly pushed back.

If the adventurers leave for the breach quickly, then they find a heated battle between the invading undead and the village defenders. A dozen soldiers fight here against ever-increasing numbers of zombies. These eleven cathars statted as **guards** (MM 347), along with a single clergy member (treat her as a **priest** [MM 348] without Divine Eminence, no 2nd or 3rd level spells, and only 10 HP). If the adventurers took their time getting here, or didn't complete the "Finding Runners" quest, five of these cathars are dead when they arrive.

The cathars' goal is to push the undead out long enough to barricade the breach, but they don't have the numbers to do so. Only with the adventurer's help in the fight can they hope to accomplish their task.

Optional: Influence Dice

In this battle, the adventurers are given their own targets to eliminate while the cathars fight their own battles with the undead in the background. To help illustrate the fight, you may consider using this optional Influence Dice mechanic, where the combatants in the backdrop can still influence the party's battle while still being rolls-light.

Represent the background defender's influence in the fight with two Ally Dice (d6's), or only one dice if five cathars are already dead. Represent the background undead's influence with three Enemy Dice.

At the end of each round, roll the dice for each side. For every 6 in the result, that side does something that affect's the party's fight. If the 6 is a result of the Ally Dice roll, it's a help; if it's a result of the Enemy Dice roll, it's a hindrance.

For every result of 5, that side does something that affects the party's fight, but at a negative cost to themeselves.

Possible effects include:

Help	Hindrance
A cathar fires a crossbow bolt into an enemy that one of the characters is engaged with. The enemy takes 4 damage.	A zombie catches a character unaware with a slammed fist into its back, dealing 4 damage.
A gust of spectral wind is felt as the spirit of Saint Traft materializes on the battlefield and swings his greatsword at the PC's enemy, dealing 2d6+5 damage and knocking the target prone, before his spirit is swept away elsewhere by the wind.	One zombie or skeleton joins the battle.
The clergy member rushes over to a wounded character and casts *cure wounds*, healing 7 hit points, before rejoining the cathars in the background battle.	Zombies dogpile on one of the cathars and start devouring his flesh as his comrades fight desperately to save him.
A cathar joins the party's battle, rushing to help the most wounded looking character.	The upper half of a zombie latches onto a random PC's legs, restraining the PC. Strength check DC 10 to escape the restraint.

Waves of Undead

In order to hold the line and drive the undead back, the characters must defeat several waves of increasingly dangerous attackers while the cathars fight their own undead foes in the background. Allow each wave's resulting combat to play out, then let the next wave arrive one or two rounds after. This gives the characters a small window to ready themselves for the next fight. Alternatively, if the characters are finding combat too easy, you can have subsequent waves arrive faster.

First Wave

3 zombies (MM 316) rush forward to attack the characters closest to them, along with **3 skeletons** (MM 272) that hang back and fire at the characters with their shortbows.

If you are using Influence Dice, remove one of the Enemy Dice after the party defeats the first wave.

Second Wave

Many undead fall, yet more pour in through the breach. An anguished, unearthly chorus of shrieks is heard from above. Swooping down into the battle is a spectral humanoid figure draped in tattered rags and dangling iron chains. The shrieking emits from large gaping mouths all over its body that glow an intense bright blue.

A **shriekgeist** (PICTURE), statted as a **specter** (MM 279), has been lured to the ensuing carnage like a moth to a flame. It attacks the adventurers with incomprehensible hatred.

2 zombies and **2 skeletons** also join the battle using the same tactics as above.

If you are using Influence Dice, remove one of the Enemy Dice after the party defeats the second wave.

Third Wave

A low, booming roar is heard from the wall, followed by shouts of surprise and despair as a hulking stitched abomination heaves itself through the breach. It swings morningstar down at the nearest cathar, slamming the poor human deep into the earth with a sickening crunch and a spatter of blood. More zombies squeeze through as the skaab moves forward.

2 zombies, **1 skeleton**, and **1 skaab goliath** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE). Same tactics as above.

Developments

If the adventurers defeat all three waves, the cathars destroy the remaining undead and have enough time to seal up the breach with a makeshift barricade of wood and stone debris. It's not very strong, but it's enough to deter the undead from entering through here.

If the adventurers retreat from the battle instead, then the position is quickly overrun by undead. While many more zombies enter through the breach, all is not lost, since the horde as a whole isn't organized enough to take full advantage of this entrance and send more numbers through. Any surviving cathars retreat back to the gate to inform Captain Levi of the situation, which he responds to by leading a group of his best soldiers to launch a counterattack and reclaim the area.

Results

The location of the next encounter, "Necromancer Confrontation," depends on the adventurer's previous actions:

- If both the gate and the breach were successfully defended, a frustrated Rinelda scales the wall and makes a last-ditch attempt to defeat the defenders with her remaining forces.
- If either the gate or wall breach was lost, then Rinelda enters through that location with her remaining forces.
- If both the gates and the wall breach were lost, then the undead overrun the outer defenses. The defenders are routed, and a messenger comes to the adventurers telling them to regroup at the chapel. The adventurers have enough time for a short rest before an overconfident Rinelda leads the final assault against the chapel, calling out any champions to face her.

Necromancer Confrontation

A messenger arrives from Captain Levi, requiring the party's immediate assistance: a necromancer has arrived and is cutting through his troops. The adventurers are needed to stop her onslaught.

When the characters arrive, dozens of defenders and zombies are locked in battle. Rinelda Smitt stands out amongst the crowd, squaring off with Captain Levi. The cathar commander, statted as a **thug** (MM 350; Lawful Good), is barely hanging in there -- he's down to 10 hit points and suffering from 1 level of exhaustion. Rinelda is toying with him using her *spiritual weapon* (in the form of a spectral dagger) to stab at him.

If you want to use Influence Dice in this battle, represent the defenders fighting here with two Ally Dice, and the undead two Enemy Dice.

Rinelda Smitt (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE) travels with **3 zombies** (MM 316) that she uses as her personal bodyguards. If attacked, she'll use her reaction to shove a zombie in front of the blow if possible. Rinelda prefers to fight at range, casting *hold person* and *sacred flames* as appropriate while swinging with her *spiritual weapon* spell.

The necromancer has a terrible temper and delusions of immortality, considering how well she's survived all her life so far. She can be coaxed into fighting recklessly, and if pressed into melee, she casts *inflict wounds*.

Developments

Rinelda Smitt is insane The teen lost her parents at a very young age and has survived in the wilderness purely off her talents in necromancy. She is devoid of empathy for her victims, seeing humans as useful only as resources to raid for food, clothing, shelter, and their corpses for undead. She offers no remorse because such a feeling is alien to her.

The only thing Rinelda understands and respects is power. If her life is on the line, she'll explain her partnership with Siegfried, and how she's culling the land to bring him



Art by Karl Kopinski

corpses for his experiments (see "The Horde's Purpose"). Rinelda respects Siegfried's talents and hopes to learn everything she can as his apprentice before inevitably murdering him and taking over his residence.

Rinelda carries basic necessities (clothing, food) along with a *ghoulcaller's bell* (APPENDIX A) (PICTURE), and a large pouch containing 5 ep and 92 gp. On her person is a note written by Siegfried, reminding the teen to collect everything she can find in his shop's basement, from papers to alchemical supplies.

Victory!

With Rinelda defeated, the undead briefly falter, looking dazed. A loud cheer erupts from nearby defenders as they see the adventurer's victory. The people fight fiercer with renewed resolve, pushing back the horde and eventually vanquishing them. It takes another two hours to clean up any undead roaming within the town's walls.

How well the defenders fared depends on the adventurer's accomplishments. If both the gate and wall breach held, then casualties and property damage are shockingly few. The more failed objectives, the worse the death toll and damage to Shadowgrange.

The townsfolk spend the next day carrying out post-battle activities: clergy members tend to the wounded, cathars dismantle barricades, tradesfolk begin repairing damages, and other people help with gathering the dead to be buried later.

A group of cathars rides out to cleanse the surrounding valley of any pockets of undead still roaming the land. The few scattered zombies are easily disposed of. When the cathars return, they bring news that some of the zombies were guarding large wooden wagons, some empty and others holding corpses.

Once all the immediate concerns are taken care of, Priestess Flora invites the characters to a great victory celebration. The celebration begins with a rousing speech by Flora in front of the chapel, where she publicly thanks the characters eachby name. Take the time to play this scene out, and make sure to call out a couple of key actions of bravery or even luck that each character displayed during the battle. Without the party's help, hundreds of people would now be dead and Shadowgrange would have been lost.

At the end of the speech, Flora motions to bring forth a large chest filled with coins to be given to the adventurers as thanks. Assuming the characters succeeded on each objective, the chest contains 2,100 cp, 1,050 sp, and 260 gp. Reduce the amount of coins depending on how many objectives were failed, as the town will need more money to repair damages incurred in the battle.

After the chest is presented and the crowd finishes cheering for the adventurers, Eckhardt approaches them and asks for a word in private. When they move somewhere more quiet, the innkeeper solemnly gifts the party two of the best items from the cathars' armory. If Captain Levi fell in battle, these are his personal items, and Eckhardt explains that the deceased cathar would be honored if his arms continued to slay the wicked. The gifts are a *+1 weapon* and *+1 armor/shield*. Customize the weapon and armor to your party: for example, if a Dexterity-focused rogue still needs a weapon and prefers using a rapier, perhaps the weapon is a *+1 rapier* called Kindness; its handguard decorated in silver filigree in the shape of a thousand feathers; it glows pale blue in the presence of fiends.

Defeat!

If the characters failed to defeat Rinelda but succeeded in either holding the gate or the wall breach, then the necromancer forces the defenders to retreat to the chapel while the horde overruns the rest of Shadowgrange. Here the adventurers have enough time for a short rest before Rinelda gathers her forces for a final assault. This is the final chance to stop the undead and save the town.

If the adventurers fail to stop Rinelda at the chapel, then the defenders are broken. Priestess Flora and the rest of the surviving council members rallies what's left of the townsfolk for one desperate push, fighting their way out of Shadowgrange. They take heavy losses doing so, but eventually the survivors make it out alive. The undead horde is too disorganized to give chase.

Priestess Flora contacts the characters and thanks them for their aid, but she is unable to hide the bitterness and despair in her voice. There is no ceremony, and this meeting is rushed. Shadowgrange is lost, and its people flee south to neighboring communities as refugees. Word of the horde's rampage travels to Silbern (see "Evacuation") and perhaps the cathars there mobilize enough troops to stop the horde. Or maybe the vampire families step in, destroying the undead to protect their

human livestock.

Developments

After the adventurers have a bit of time to recover from the battle, Priestess Flora contacts them. She explains that her people have never encountered an undead horde like the one they faced. Flora knows that the stitched horrors, the skaabs, are the foul work of necro-alchemists. If the army was built by such people, it may be that the horde they encountered is but a precursor to more attacks to come. For the sake of all Stensia, Flora begs the adventurers to find the source of these undead and stop it once and for all. The refugees from Mordov said that the horde came from the north, and the most notable location north of there is Mauer Estate, a long-abandoned mansion that has housed many residents over the centuries, from ancient royalty to mad wizards.

If the adventurers mention Siegfried, either their findings in his alchemy shop or the note on Rinelda Smitt, then Priestess Flora agrees that he could be the source. Siegfried was last seen heading in the direction of Mauer Estate, and if they have evidence that he turned to necro-alchemy, then it seems like he would be the first one the adventurers should confront.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 2,000 XP equally among the characters if the party helps save the townsfolk from the undead horde.

If the undead horde is defeated, award another 4,800 XP equally among the characters.

Conclusion of Part 3

Part 3 begins once the adventurers decide to head north to Mauer Estate, where Siegfried works tirelessly to create even more fearsome threats.

Milestone: Level 4!

If you are using Milestone Experience, then the characters attain 4th level after the horde has been dealt with.



Art by James Paick

Part 4: Into the Farbog

In this part of the adventure, the characters travel to Mauer Estate, located at the northern edge of Stensia's outer valley. To do so, they will need to journey through a large bog that divides the southern part of the valley from its northern tip.

Depending on which NPCs the characters met and which quests or clues they picked up, some or all the following information might be known to them:

- Priestess Flora wants the characters to travel to Mauer Estate and uncover the source of the undead.
- Rinelda Smit can confirm that Siegfried is the creator of the undead armies and is working at Mauer Estate.
- Silvia Wintsch wants the characters to bring her any sanguine lotus they find in the bog.
- Siegfried holds the missing piece of the Strionic Resonator, which some of the characters may have been tasked to retrieve for the Church of Avacyn.

Farbog Superstitions

If the characters agree to Priestess Flora's request to check out Mauer Estate, she thanks them for their courage and commitment to righteousness. Flora warns them to be careful while traversing the farbog (Innistrad's fancy term for bog/swamp) that the adventurers must pass through to reach the estate. In particular, she warns them about hellhounds: "I know you're strong and capable adventurers, but trust me, if you come across a hellhound... run." This warning is particularly important to give the characters, as it sets up the "Hounds of Baskerville" encounter.

Once the characters accept Flora's mission, word spreads around town of the character's impending journey through the farbog (Flora tells her clergymen, they tell friends and relatives, and it spreads). Helpful, but superstitious townsfolk approach the party members and offer advice on how to stay safe. The suggestions range from reasonably insightful to ignorance. Some suggestions include:

- Never stare into a hellhound's eyes or it will devour your soul.
- Eat wormwood and other bitter herbs; it will make

you less palatable to things that roam the night (the townsfolk that suggests it offers the character some of the aforementioned herb).
- Travel by day and rest at roadside shrines by night.
- If you hear howling at midnight, someone close to you will die.
- Be quiet while traversing the ancient grafs (Innistrad's fancy term for "crypt") inside the farbog, lest you wake the dead.
- Pale ghosts are the friendly kind, except when they're not.
- Travel by night and rest at roadside shrines by day.
- If a black cat crosses the road in front of you, it's a sign of bad luck.

If the characters ask about the farbog itself, they can find out from various townsfolk that it's a treacherous swamp that people avoid if possible. One prominent rumor is that the farbog used to be a beautiful forest with one of the most influential settlements in all of Innistrad, but an evil tainted the forest, turning it into the farbog it is now.

The bog has a well-known reputation for being the residence of hellhounds, though it's also said that few folk are lucky enough to see one and live to tell the tale. Others mention that ancient grafs dissolve into the muck, causing the restless dead to stir as geists (spirits) and ghouls.

Traveling to the Swamp

It takes one day of traveling north through the outer valley to reach the farbog. A few abandoned communities can be found in between Shadowgrange and the bog; the undead horde passed through these settlements on their way to Shadowgrange, killing most of the inhabitants and sending their corpses back to Mauer Estate. None of these communities are remarkable: each is comprised of outlying farms and cabins huddled together, with a modest chapel for prayer. If you wish, you can place one of these villages in the path of the characters, offering the opportunity to explore the wreckage. Perhaps a few people managed to survive the undead's rampage and still live here. Or maybe some undead still linger in the area, hungering for the living.

The zombie horde left Mauer Estate and trekked south, through the farbog, through the small villages, all the way to Shadowgrange. Their footprints are easy to spot and follow back to the estate. In addition to footprints, heavy wagon wheels can be followed. These wagons were carried by the horde and filled with corpses. Once filled, the wagon would be hauled back to Mauer Estate, where Siegfried would use them in his experiements.

The Farbog

Once the adventurers enter the farbog, read or paraphrase: *The grassy plains of the valley dampens into inky black muck as you enter the farbog. Barren pine trees sink into the mud at odd angles, creating a tangle of dead trunks. A dreary grey mist envelopes the area.*

The farbog is muddy, damp, and stinks of rotting vegetation. A mist surrounds the area; it doesn't impede nearby vision, but anything beyond 300 feet disappears behind the grey curtain.

The ground is a mix of muddy earth and shallow bog. Traveling through here is considered difficult terrain (see the rulebook for more information). The zombie horde mostly stuck to the main road that passes through the swamp; adventurers following the main road or zombie horde can easily track hundreds of shambling footprints and heavy wagon wheels dragged through the muck.

Following the main road, which runs north to south, is the easiest way to journey through the swamp towards Mauer Estate.

Swamp Encounters

Traveling through the swamp takes one day. Along the journey through the farbog, the characters will partake in three of the following events below (though feel free to run as many events as you wish!).

Choose three of the events, marking when they occur (day/night). Alternatively, roll a D6 and consult the Swamp Encounters table to determine what the party meets, rerolling any 6 or duplicate results.

The difficulty of combat encounters and their subsequent XP awards assume a party of four level 4's. If this is not the case in your game, or if you wish to make the combat easier or harder, you may tweak the combat encounters to your desired difficulty with Kobold Fight Club or similar builders.

d8	Event
1	The Hounds of Baskerville
2	Whispers of Hope and Doom
3	Deadly Lotus
4	Little Girl's Plea
5	Corpse Wagons

The Hounds of Baskerville

This encounter works best if the characters have been

previously warned about hellhounds in the swamp (See "Farbog Superstitions").

As the characters journey through the swamp, they pass by the sunken remains of a long-forgotten village called Baskerville. What little remains of the crumbling and sunken village structures is barely recognizable in the overgrowth and muck. The skeletal remains of many of the villagers can be found littered around the area. A Wisdom (Medicine) DC 12 reveals none of them died from physical violence. A Wisdom (Insight) DC 15 check indicates that the people appear to have all died in a state of absolute terror.

The area filled with gloomgas mushrooms. These mushrooms release spores with hallucinogenic properties as the characters pass through. The spores fill the air and mixes invisibily with the surrounding fog.

The gloomgas mushrooms grow at the base of the surrounding pine trees, blending perfectly with the bark. The spore clouds are released with a low rumbling sound that echoes throughout the area and is almost impossible to pinpoint its origins. Characters can spot one of these mushrooms with a DC 25 Perception check. A Nature DC 20 can identify a spotted gloomgas mushroom.

Every round that a character is exposed to the spores, they must make a DC 15 Constitution check or be poisoned by the spore's hallucinogenic properties. Characters that don't breathe or are immune to poison are unaffected. Since the characters traveling through this part of the swamp are likely exposed to the spores for minutes or longer, it can be assumed that anyone not immune is eventually poisoned.

A poisoned character gradually begins to hallucinate. Read or paraphrase for them:

The fog grows cloyingly thick and surrounds you utterly. The pine trees seem taller here, leaning over you as if to snatch you with gnarled, claw-like branches. The muck you trek through sucks down your foot more with each



Art by Kajito

step you take, making it harder to move. The world is closing in on you.

Then you hear it: a low rumbling growl that emanates all around you. The growling gets louder; its tone is of sheer malice.

The growling sound is a perversion caused by the hallucination: it is actually the rumbling sound of the gloomgas mushrooms, but when heard by someone hallucinating from the spores, it sounds like a monstrous hound growling. This is the origin of the hellhound rumor. Give the poisoned characters a moment to react to the sound. Afterwards, read or paraphrase for them:

You spot them out of the corner of your vision: twin fiery red orbs burning through the cloak of fog. They move closer, and you see the rest of the figure emerge – a monstrous hound, as tall as a human, stepping forward on thick, muscular legs. As it growls, the beast exhales embers from its open maw filled with razor-sharp teeth and revealing a hot glow emanating from its throat.

You hear more growling from behind. Turning around, you see a second fiendish hound approaching from the opposite direction. Suddenly, the two beasts rush toward you in a full sprint, their eyes blazing with unbridled hatred.

These **2 hellhounds** (MM 182) are actually hallucinations caused by the gloomgas mushroom's spores. Only characters hallucinating from the spores can see, hear, or be affected by them. The hounds circle around and strike at the weakest looking character, using their pack tactics to eliminate the target quickly before moving to the next. They use their Fire Breath if they can hit two or more characters with it. All damage dealt by the hounds to hallucinating characters looks like physical wounds, but in fact the characters are unknowingly taking psychic damage instead.

There are a few ways for a poisoned character to recognize the illusion. When a character is damaged for the first time by a hellhound, they must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a success, they notice something "off" about the hellhound – its features are hazy and blurred, it leaves no footprints, there's no weight to its attacks, etc. After this success, they can spend an action to concentrate on the hound, making a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On this success, the character shakes off the hallucination and the hellhounds disappear for them.

Alternatively, a character not hallucinating can help a poisoned ally shake off its effects by convincing the person that no hell hounds exist. They can stand in the same spot as where the "hellhound" stands, or try to explain that they are hallucinating, or anything else they can come up with. Doing so takes an action. When this is done, the ally can immediately make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,400 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the hell hounds and/or shake off the hallucination.

Whispers of Hope and Doom

As you journey through the bog, you hear a shrill scream emanating from all around you. A dark red mist emerges from the ground all around you, mixing with the pervasive fog, thickening like a blood clot. The red mist envelopes the area, so thick that you can barely see your hand in front of you. Your entire body is quickly covered by a thin layer of this bloody substance, and the air smells of fire and brimstone.

The adventurers walk through a part of the farbog that is home to a colony of hellscream fungi that thrive on the rotting vegetation languishing in the muck. The fungi release a cloud of spores as the adventurers pass by, enveloping the surrounding area in a thick bloody red 200 ft. radius "fog" that smells similar to fire and brimstone. The opaque fog heavily obscures vision (see "Vision and Light" in the Player's Handbook p183). The spores coat exposed surfaces -- including the adventurers -- but are otherwise harmless. The fungi can be identified with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) check. The spore cloud disperses after an hour.

Unfortunately for the adventurers, the spore cloud is the least of this area's hazards. As they wander through the spore cloud, a **will-o'-wisp** (p301) approaches them.

You see an orb of warm light pierce through the red fog. As it bobs up and down excitedly, you hear a faint whisper that says, "Follow me, travelers. You are grave danger here. Hurry!"

Technically, the wisp does not lie: the adventurers are in grave danger. But the wisp *is* the danger. An adventurer that does not trust the wisp can roll a Wisdom (Insight) check against the wisp's Charisma (Deception) check (+0) to gauge its intent.

In truth, the wisp aims only to distract the adventurers and lead them in circles inside the spore cloud, because this is the hunting ground of its master, a **grell** (MM p172). If attacked, the wisp goes invisible and backs away, content to watch its master feed while it hisses taunts at the adventurers. If the grell is killed however, the wisp lashes out in a rage, spitting curses and vile phrases as it fights to the death. (Note that the wisp's vision is heavily

Art by Jason Engle



obscured by the spore cloud.)

Meanwhile, the grell tries to sneak up behind the group. With its blindsight, the aberration isn't affected by the spore cloud at all. If all the adventurers are effectively blind then the grell automatically succeeds in sneaking up, as it makes no sound while flying and the adventurers can't see it. Otherwise, roll a Stealth check (+6) against the Passive Perception of adventurers that can see through the spore cloud. The aberration attacks anyone that gets separated from the group. If no opportunity arises, it attacks an adventurer that stands at the back of the group. The grell tries to grapple and paralyze its prey and then float away back to its lair with the character paralyzed character in its clutches.

Developments

The grell lairs in a makeshift treehouse made of petrified wood up in the strong, sprawling branches of a nearby oak tree. The treehouse is a single room that houses the grell's nest made up of twigs and small branches. There are no ropes or ladders to reach the house, but an adventurer can climb up to it with a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.

If the grell manages to sneak off with a paralyzed adventurer, it brings them here before knocking them unconscious to be a meal for later.

Treasure

Scattered inside the treehouse is a small collection of items the grell kept from its previous victims. Rummaging through the nest will uncover 30 cp, 15 sp, 5 gp, a *bag of holding* (DMG p153), and a wizard's spellbook with the following spells written inside: *alarm, color spray, thunderwave, unseen servant, arcane lock, rope trick.*

In addition, there is a small ribbed glass bottle with a sparkling silvery gas floating inside. This is a *message bottle* (see APPENDIX A). Uncorking the bottle releases the gas, and all in the immediate area hear the voice of the will-o'-wisp begin to speak, "it killed me... I watched it devour my body while I could do nothing... NOTHING! This damned beast! I hate it! It is invulnerable, cannot be killed, my master..." With that, the silvery gas dissipates.

The will-o'-wisp was once a traveler that was killed

by the grell. With an all-consuming need for revenge, it assaulted the grell, only to find out that the aberration was completely immune to its electricity attack. The wisp was slowly driven insane by this revelation, and in a cruel irony, its shattered psyche came to love the grell that murdered it, helping the creature feed on passing travelers.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,250 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the grell and the will-o'-wisp.

Deadly Lotus

Before running this event, it's important that you as the DM know what the party's marching order is. Specifically, you need to know who is marching in front and how close people are following behind. This is a good habit to know in general, but this particular event requires it.

Your dulled senses trekking through the dreary swamp suddenly perk up as you notice sharp, vibrant patches of red that practically glow in the muck ahead of you: beautiful red lotus flowers floating in the shallow water.

A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the remnants of lotus flowers around the area, but they have been trampled and destroyed by the zombie horde. A dozen of the flowers up ahead are untouched, however, as there are no footprints around them.

A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check correctly identifies these as the rare sanguine lotus, whose petals are used to create powerful healing potions. If the adventurer has the quest "Find the Lotus" from Silvia, then they automatically identify the plant. The sanguine lotus are harmless and pose no threat to the characters.

The quicksand that the lotus petals float in, however, is definitely a threat. The patch of quicksand is 20 feet in diameter. A DC 15 Survival check tells a character in advance that something is not right with the patch of ground containing the quicksand, but the character must actively be searching for such dangerous ground. Running or charging characters have no chance to detect the quicksand before falling prey to it.

Any character marching in front that isn't aware of the quicksand will step in it. If one or more adventurers fall into the quicksand, read:

Your walk comes to an abrupt halt as you notice your feet have become stuck in a pool of silty water. Your feet don't budge, and a moment later you start to feel a crushing weight on them as you slowly begin getting sucked down into the muck.

Once a creature has set foot in quicksand, its natural tendency is to struggle to free itself. Any type of struggle will actually have the opposite effect. Moving any portion of the body that has been submerged causes the sand to shift from underneath the moved body part, thus sucking it deeper into the morass. The best way to escape quicksand is to simply lie still. Once a creature stops struggling, it will naturally float just as it would if it were in a pool of still water, albeit rising more slowly due to the weight of the sand.

Effects of Quicksand: Characters in quicksand must make a DC 10 Swim check every round to simply tread water in place, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet. Failing these checks by 5 or more results in sinking and the very real possibility of drowning.

Rescue: Pulling out a character trapped in quicksand can be difficult. The rescuer needs a branch, spear haft, rope, or similar tool that enables him to reach the victim with one end of it. Then he must make a DC 15 Strength check to successfully pull the victim, and the victim must make a DC 10 Strength check to hold onto the branch, pole, or rope. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety. If the victim fails to hold on, he must make a DC 15 Swim check immediately to stay above the surface.

The quicksand isn't the only danger here, however. A **lumberknot** (statted as a **shambling mound**; MM p270) (PICTURE) lies dormant nearby, perfectly blended into the undergrowth. When an adventurer falls into the quicksand, the lumberknot comes to life and lurches towards the party to consume them.

Suddenly the undergrowth near the quicksand rises from the ground. A rotting heap of oak looms up half again as tall as a human, its midsection bursting open to reveal a cruel gaping "maw" crowned by rows of savage, stake-like "teeth." It shambles towards you, the roots and vines wrapped around its figure animating and stretching out in your direction.

The lumberknot moves at a slow 20 feet, so adventurers not stuck in quicksand can potentially outrun it. If brought below 30 hit points, the treefolk feigns death, collapsing into a rotting heap of inanimate vegetation. If not subsequently killed, the central root-stem, the lumberknot's "brain," beds down in its remains to slowly regrow its full body.

Developments

The adventurers can collect up to a dozen sanguine lotus if they can retrieve them from the quicksand. The lotus petals last for a week before rotting. If they are returned

alive to Silvia, she pays the adventurers 50 gp (-5gp for each missing lotus) and gives them three vials of *life's blood* (see APPENDIX A).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,800 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the lumberknot.

A Little Girl's Plea

As the adventurers travel through the farbog, or perhaps while they stop to rest, they are approached by a geist (spirit).

A voice calls out to you: it sounds like a little girl, but the voice is strange, warped, like hearing the message through the end of a long metal tube. "Please, misters. Please help me! Mum and dad are hurting and left me. Will you bring them back to me?" Looking around, you notice a small humanoid figure, her features hidden under silken sheets. The spirit's translucent body emits a soft pale glow.

The ghost is of Anna Helmvin, a little girl that died here long ago in a time when the barren swamp held a thriving community. She poses no threat to the characters, but follows them for a while, begging them to help her. If attacked, she turns invisible and runs away sobbing.

Anna will freely answer any questions the adventurers have, but her knowledge is restricted by when she was "awake" and is filtered through her child psyche. Here is a list of things she knows that the characters may ask about:

- This place was once a village. People were happy.
- Anna and her parents died when their house burned down. Anna died in her room, her parents died trying to save her.
- Her parent's spirits were really sad and angry for not saving Anna, but eventually all of them found peace in the Blessed Sleep when the villagers buried them
- Anna doesn't know what happened around here while she was sleeping.
- Anna and her parents woke up recently when "bad men" dug up their graves.
- Anna can lead characters to the graves, and point them in the direction that the "bad men" fled to.

The grave site is located on a small hill not far from where the adventurers meet Anna. The three graves have been dug up and the shovels used for the digging have been left on the ground beside them. The remains of Anna and her parents are still in their graves, however a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) reveals to anyone searching the bodies that jewelery -- rings, necklaces, braclets -- have clearly been ripped off the skeletons, with bits of gold, silver, and a pearl left over. The shovels left here, the hurriedly removed jewelery, and the running footprints leaving the area point that the robbers were fleeing.

Adventurers can track the footprints or follow where Anna pointed (she cannot venture too far from her grave). Along the way, they come across a charred corpse clutching a pearl necklace missing a bead. This was one of the robbers, and it looks like he was burned alive.

The characters can continue following the track until they come across a roadside shrine where the second robber is staying.

Up ahead the muddy swamp floor abruptly gives away to a circle dry earth. Sprouting in the midst of this circle is a wide pine tree stump. Carved from what used to be its trunk and rising up from its stump is the symbol of the Church: Avacyn's Collar.

Sitting beside the shrine is a human clothed in mudcaked wools and leathers. He cautiously holds a light crossbow in his hands, his tired eyes constantly scanning the swamps around him.

The second robber, Bran Halfhelm (a **commoner;** MM 345), has stayed at this road shrine for two days now. He is a refugee from Mordov (see "Refugees"). Him and his brother, Rickard, managed to escape the slaughter by running deep into the farbog. They hoped to cross the swamp and seek shelter at one of the northern villages. Fleeing with just the clothes on their backs, they happened upon Anna's grave site and decided to rob it for a chance to have enough money to pay for a hot meal and a place to stay once they reached a village.

Unfortunately for Bran and Rickard, their grave robbery awoke the spirits, and two fiery geists (Anna's parents) chased them down. Rickard was caught and burned alive, but Bran managed to reach the safety of this roadside shrine, where the angry spirits cannot reach him. He is certain that the geists are waiting for him to leave the circle to kill him.

Bran begs the adventurers to protect him from the geists. At first, he does not mention that he robbed the graves, only that angry geists chased him here and killed his brother. If the adventurers press him, Bran will reveal the truth, but stress that he was desperate, having lost everything to the zombie horde, and needs the money to pay for basic needs if he ever gets out of the swamp (which is true). He argues that the dead don't need jewelery.

If the adventurers convince Bran to hand over his stolen jewlery, he gives them a gold ring with etchings of soaring herons on its outside (worth 25gp), and a silver bracelet with a sapphire stylishly embedded into its center (worth 20gp). The gold ring is one of two wedding rings -- Bran withholds the second one, though an appropriate

Intelligence check can figure out that there should be two wedding rings, or a Wisdom (Insight) check notices that Bran might be holding something back. Though he's desperate for some money, Bran values his life above all else, so he'll hand over the final item if pressured to.

Developments

The ghosts of Anna's parents cannot enter the shrine's circle, so they patiently wait. If Bran leaves 300 feet from the shrine's circle, they materialize as two **fire geists** (APPENDIX B) and attack him relentlessly. If Bran dies, they will then attack anyone else holding their wedding rings.

Defeating the geists does not satisfy Anna, who says that her parents are still hurting, and they'll just come back later. She thinks that "putting their stuff back" will be the only way her parents will go back to sleep.

Returning the wedding rings back to the parent's graves is the only way to return their spirits to the Blessed Sleep. If this is done:

You feel a soothing breeze pass by you. Anna appears in front of you, no longer shrouded in silks but a happy, beaming girl in a dress. Standing right behind her parents, smiling at nodding at you. "You gave me back my mommy and daddy. Thank you!" The three spirits then fade away.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,400 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the two fire geists.

Divide an additional 1,000 XP equally among the characters if the party puts the spirits to rest.

Corpse Wagons

Run this encounter only if the adventurers have been following the zombie horde's tracks.

While the horde's tracks move south away from Mauer Estate, some wagon tracks are spotted moving north, back toward the estate. These are the wagons that were filled with corpses and sent back to Siegfried.

As the adventurers follow the tracks, they come across one of these wooden corpse wagons sitting in their path. The wagon is filled with corpses. The four zombies that were pulling the wagon are found on the ground just in front of it. They have been cut down neatly into a pile of body parts. A DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check while observing the bodies notes that they were cut down with clean, precise cuts from a sharp weapon, possibly a sword. Additionally, characters can spot new footprints near the zombies: human bootprints, two pairs. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check notes that these boots are plate greaves, part of a set of plate armor. The bootprints appeared a few paces from the zombies and approached them; there's signs of brief struggle, then the bootprints walked a few paces and mysteriously vanish.

In truth, this was the work of vampires. House Falkenrath has become worried about Siegfried's activities. When they found out that the necro-alchemist was collecting bodies, they sent some of their kin to intercept the corpse wagons to deprive Siegfried of supplies. These two



Art by Jana Shirmer & Johannes Voss

vampires landed at the wagon, quickly dispatched of the zombies pulling it, and then flew away.

If the adventurers continue following the zombie horde's tracks for another hour, they come to a second wagon just as the zombies escorting it are being cut down. Hans and Franz, two **vampire spawn warriors** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE), quickly dispatch the zombies with little effort.

As you continue walking, you spot the hazy form of a wagon about three hundred feet away at the mist's edge. It is slowly moving north, being pulled by three humanoids. Suddenly, two humanoids with large pale wings appear in the sky above, plunging through the mist to the wagon. There are brief sounds of a commotion; staggered groans, then silence again.

The vampires linger beside the wagon for a few minutes to chat. Hans complains about their assignment, saying this is grunt work, that his new boots are caked in mud, the bog reeks, and that there's a small hamlet not far from here they can stop by to "get a bite to eat." Franz scolds Hans, telling him to take the assignment seriously and stop complaining, that he needs to exercise more and isn't "pumped up" enough.

If the adventurers do not approach or are not spotted, the two vampires fly away after a few minutes.

If the vampires notice the adventurers and aren't immediately attacked, they try to strike up conversation:

The two figures turn to you. Both wear fine red silken clothes under their armor; red enameled plate with gold trim. Both have strange, wondrous eyes, golden irisis swimming in pools of black sclera. Their pale faces wear very different expressions: one man a cold grimace, the other man a haughty smirk.

"It seems we have company, Franz," the man says, "a band of seasoned looking fellows, heading north... oh! You must be the 'Heroes of Shadowgrange!' Such an honor!" he says, performing a mock bow.

Hans wants to banter with the adventurers, as he's bored and looking for entertainment. Franz, however, is a no-nonsense kind of vampire and wants to finish taking out the corpse wagons so that they can head home.

Franz is tight-lipped when dealing with the adventurers, while Hans does entertain questions, albeit with mocking sarcasm. For example, if asked what the vampires are doing here, he replies, "taking a stroll, of course. The farbog is lovely this time of year." He does congratulate the adventurers, however, saying that the Falkenraths are happy they aided Shadowgrange and "protected the cattle." The vampires are just as opposed to the zombie horde -- and Siegfried's other machinations -- as everyone is, because the vampires rely on healthy, thriving human settlements as food.

If asked to help defeat Siegfried, Hans explains that the alchemist is holed up in the Mauer Estate and that the building has a protective holy ward that prevents the vampires from attacking directly. He is willing to help the adventurers if they deal with Siegfried for the vampires; for example, he's willing to find out what happened to Katarina and relay that information to them, after the estate's holy wards are taken down.

The vampires defend themselves if attacked or provoked enough, but they are under strict orders not to kill the characters, a fact that Franz must remind Hans. The Falkenrath know of the adventurers' quest and would like to see the party do the dirty work of disposing Siegfried for them. If one vampire is killed, the other attempts to flee, swearing revenge (maybe returning with other vampires to attack the party in a future adventure).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,050 XP equally among the characters if the party speaks with the vampires. If they manage to defeat the vampires, divide 3,600 XP instead.

Conclusion of Part 4

On the end of the second day of travel, the party reaches the end of the swamp.

You leave the black muck of the farbog behind and are greeted with a fresh breeze to the open valley ahead of you. Soft rolling hills cascade ahead of you, flanked by the jagged stone valley walls.

Up a few miles ahead is a grove of greenery rising up from the short grass. Poking up from its center, high above the forest ceiling, is a twisting stone tower adorned by glistening metal contraptions. The tower shimmers with wisps of pale lights, like ribbons dancing in the breeze.

Angry dark clouds gather over the valley. They seem to concentrate over the grove, as if nature's wrath was winding up to smite the tower. Quick flashes of lightning pop from inside the restless clouds. A storm is coming...

The adventurers have nearly reached the end of their journey: Mauer Estate stands defiantly in front of them. They need only cross the valley, descend into the thicket's center, and enter.

Awarding Experience Points

Crossing the farbog completes a story milestone. Divide 1,200 XP equally among the characters.

There is no milestone level up for this Chapter.



Art by John Stanko

Chapter 5: The Perfect Storm

Sixty miles north of Shadowgrange, nestled in a clearing at the center of a grove of live oak trees deep within northern Stensia, stands Mauer Estate. The mansion is one of the oldest buildings in the region, its foundation dating back thousands of years to a holy sect of paladins that brought the Light to Innistrad long before even Avacyn. Since then, countless occupants have claimed Mauer Estate as their home, modifying the grounds to suit their needs.

Siegfried is the estate's current owner and uses it as his base of operations. Ever since he fled Shadowgrange in the wake of his beloved Katarina's kidnapping (see "Background" in Introduction), the alchemist spends his days here working tirelessly to carry out his goal of revenge. Siegfried descent into madness has attracted demons to his cause. The fiends aid in his work and whisper dark secrets that further taint his warped psyche.

A great storm brews overhead: part of Siegfried's machinations, in fact. The mad alchemist seeks to harness the storm's power to bring his ultimate creation to life. The adventurers have a chance to confront Siegfried and put a stop to his nefarious schemes. And of course, untold riches await those brave enough to explore the ancient areas hidden deep inside the estate.

The Grove

Mauer Estate's grove is nestled deep within the farbog. The small forest is comprised of a half mile radius of oak trees (PICTURE). The trees' thick sprawling branches intertwine with their neighbors, obscuring vision and making it difficult to navigate through the area.

The oak trees are littered with what look like normal wood knots at a distance, but closer inspection shows these lumps are all have human shapes -- agonized faces, outstretched hands -- as if people were trapped inside the bark. Destroying the lumps only finds ordinary wood, however.

The telltale signs of the zombie horde's trek -- hundreds

of footprints and wagon wheels -- lead from the grove south to the swamp. Adventurers can easily track them north to the grove's main entrance, a path carved through the trees specifically to allow the horde to pass through. The branches and trees that were in the path's way were smashed and splintered by skaab abominations and the debris tossed to the side.

The adventurers don't need to follow the main path into the grove; they are free to enter the grove from any direction. However, the main path is the only method of traveling unimpeded through the grove: walking through from anywhere else requires navigating up and around the twisting jungle of low-hanging live oak branches.

Lady of the Woods

The adventurers attract the curiosity of Eudora, a **dryad** (MM p121) (PICTURE) living in the grove. Eudora casts *pass without trace* before following the party sneakily.

As you make your way through the grove, you hear youthful feminine voice whisper in your ear, "My my, what do we have here? I rarely have living visitors in my woods. Who are you, and why have you come?" Out of the corner of your eyes you catch a glimpse of a feminine form flitting through the trees before its gone again with only warm laughter hanging in the air.

While Eudora probes the characters for information, the dryad uses her *tree stride* to keep a distance from the adventurers and ducks into hiding when she's out of sight, using her +15 Dexterity (Stealth).

If the adventurers explain why they are here and she is convinced that they mean her no harm, she reveals herself to them. Eudora appears as a statuesque beauty, youthful and alluring. Her hair and tight-fitting dress are made of autumn leaves: vibrant fiery hues of yellow, orange, and red. The dryad radiates vigor and primal magic.

Hippie Personality

Eudora is a social creature that has been deprived of humanoid companions for a long time. Because of this, she is utterly delighted to have an opportunity to speak with friendly adventurers.

The dryad places a great deal of importance on good emotions. She wants to make sure everyone is feeling "good vibes," and advocates decision making to "follow your heart" instead of cold, rational logic.

If any character is visibly upset, or if there is any fighting amongst the group, Eudora tries to intervene in mediate, asking what is wrong, and what are the deeper issues at play. Was the character abused as a child? Did they have a good relationship with their parents? The dryad loves taking the role of a therapist and mediator.

What the Dryad Knows

Eudora has never left the grove and knows little of the outside world. She doesn't know anything about current events, though she is not a fan of Avacyn due to the archangel's persecution of druidism and "the old ways" connected to the forest.

If asked about Siegfried, Eudora tells them that she helped a grief-stricken man make it to Mauer Estate (fed him goodberries and let him rest), that he would've been beautiful if his soul wasn't wracked with anger and sadness. The dryad regrets helping him, as the alchemist has been working day and night producing undead monstrosities, abominations and mockeries of nature. His foul work only causes ruin and misery.

If asked about the human-like lumps in the oak trees, Eudora explains that long ago, when Avacyn arrived, the "people of the forest" rejected her and her new religion, preferring to stick to the old ways. Avacyn punished them for this.

Eudora's Offer

The dryad explains that she is lonely. Long ago, when the grove stretched all the way to the swamp, humans used to live in harmony with nature. In those times she had many visitors, many intimate friends. But slowly the forest receded and the world filled with darkness, and she was left here alone. What the dryad wants the most is a taste of that intimacy she enjoyed so long ago.

Having no love for the alchemist in Mauer Estate and his foul projects, Euroda offers to help the adventurers. She knows of a secret path that leads inside the mansion. But she wants something in return: each adventurer must stand up in front of the group and reveal an intimate secret about themselves that no one else in the group knows. Eudora explains that her most cherished moments with her intimate friends was when they left themselves emotionally open and vulnerable to others as an ultimate act of trust, and she wants to taste that experience one more time. The dryad warns that if any of them refuse her offer or lie, she will not show them the hidden passage.

This is a fun opportunity for roleplaying. It gives each character a spotlight to flesh out their characters and give the group a mutual understanding of one another. The intimate secret can be something silly, like a fear of butterflies, or more serious, like the characters' motivations for adventuring.

Eudora conducts the event like a group therapy meeting: she leads the group, asking each character in turn to share their story. She is polite and strives to keep the group a safe and calm environment, thanking each one for sharing

and taking her time to relish the experience. For example, if she particularly enjoys a story, she may close her eyes, take a deep breath, and smile as she exhales. "That felt true. I felt it, right here," pointing to where a human's heart would be.

Developments

If each character reveals an intimate secret to the dryad's satisfaction, or if they manage to convincingly pass off a fake tale as true, then Eudora leads them to a large live oak tree. The dryad utters a simple spell and the tree partially uproots itself, revealing a tunnel underneath: this tunnel leads to the kitchen (area A6) in Mauer Estate. The earthen tunnel is roughly dug but stable; there is no light, and the roots of the trees above dangle from its ceiling.

Eudora cannot accompany the adventurers into Mauer Estate. The dryad explains that she is magically bound to the grove and cannot leave its boundaries. The forest clearing which the estate resides is so filled with twisted magic that it's severed from nature, making her unable to enter it. If the adventurers make a good impression on her, however, she casts *goodberry* three times and gives them the berries for their journey, wishing them good luck.

If attacked, Eudora flees, using *tree stride* to help her escape. She would much rather flee than fight.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,500 XP equally among the characters if the party reveals their intimate secrets.

Mauer Estate

If the adventurers trek to the center of the grove they eventually reach a clearing where Mauer Estate resides. The storm above them begins in earnest, pouring down heavy rain and periodically striking the rooftop with lightning. (PICTURE) (MAP)

A cold rain begins pouring down as you reach the forest clearing. The heavy rainfall obscures your vision; angry gray storm clouds foaming overhead acts as a thick curtain, blocking light and leaving the clearing in a grim shadow. Leering down at you from the center of the clearing is the manor-house: Mauer Estate. Twisting up from the center of the rooftop is a stone tower, its flat ceiling crowded with a messy array of metal instrument of various shapes and sizes. Shimmering ribbons of soft pale light hang in the air surrounding the tower.

An explosive flash of lightning slams down upon a large metallic sphere atop the tower and is immediately followed by the boom of thunder. Electricity dances upon the metal apparatus and skips down long tubes attached to it that descends into the tower.

Looking around the Estate, the players hear/see:

You hear the sounds of shoveling up ahead. Circling the estate's perimeter are humanoids shoveling the muddy earth in awkward jerky movement, sending mud flying to the side. Torn bits of muddy rags cling to their wet rotting bodies.

20 zombies (MM p316) surround the mansion, using shovels to dig a shallow trench that circles the entire building. Siegfried commanded the trench be dug for a future project to fortify his base of operations. The zombies are focused on their task, so much that adventurers could walk past them without any reaction from the undead. Attacking a zombie draws their attention, however, and 1d6+3 nearby zombies shamble over to attack the adventurers. If they lose sight of the adventurers, for example of the characters flee into the woods, then the zombies return to their work.

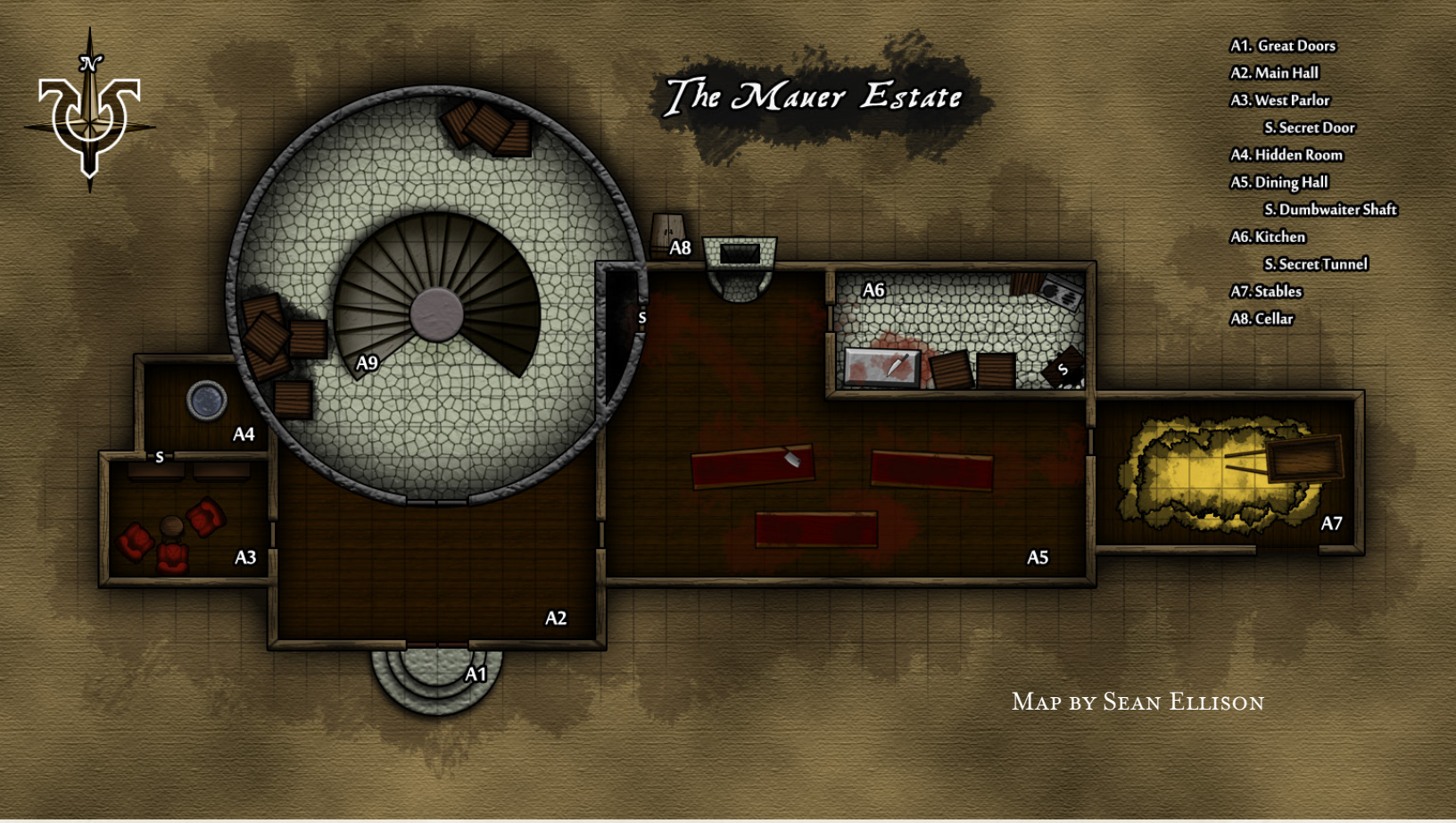
The main features of Mauer Estate that adventurers can reasonably spot in the heavy rain are:

- A pair of towering silvery doors on the southern side of the mansion: the main entrance (A1)
- The stables, a smaller, open building attached to the eastern wall of the estate estate (A7)
- Wooden double doors on the north side of the estate leading down into the cellar (A8)
- A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notes two marble statues standing in alcoves flanking the main entrance. The statues are female angels in silken gowns covering their faces with their hands as they weep, the rain washing down their faces like tears. A DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) recognizes these statues as portraying angels of the flight alabaster, protectors of humans both living and dead. (These are manor **gargoyles**; see "Climbing the Walls" below)
- A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check spots a stained glass window above the main entrance. It depicts an emblem with a pouncing lion. A DC 15 Intelligence (History) recognizes as the emblem of the House Lowe, an ancient family of nobles that was wiped out long ago by the neighboring vampire families.

Entering the Estate

There are four main ways of entering the estate:

- Go through the mansion's front door (A1)
- Entering through the door connected to the stables (A7)
- Adventurers entering the estate from Eudora's secret passage (see "Lady of the Woods") find themselves in



the kitchen (A6).

- Climb up to the rooftop and enter the laboratory (A10) through an open hatch (see "Climbing the Walls").

Of course, creative adventurers may find other methods of entrance; roll with their zany ideas when possible!

Climbing the Walls

Unorthodox adventurers may attempt to scale the walls. Climbing the rain-slicked walls in the dark is difficult even for trained climbers, requiring a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check.

Adventurers attempting to climb also attract the attention of the **2 manor gargoyles** (MM p140) disguised as angelic statues. They wait until the last adventurers begin their ascent before striking.

A shriek pierces the hiss of the driving rain. Swooping down at you on outstretched wings are two angelic figures with marble-like surfaces. Their statuesque feminine bodies are a stark contrast to their fiendish faces; small mischievous eyes stare at you behind a squished snout and rows of razor-sharp teeth. They make pig-like squeals and snorts as they cackle and close in on you.

In addition to their claws and bite, the gargoyles may try to drop climbers off the wall. They do so by grappling the target (action), moving away from the wall with them (move at half speed), and dropping them (free action). The gargoyles flee if taken below 20 hit points or if one of them is destroyed.

It's nearly impossible to climb into the second floor windows; the windows are all blocked with stone and plaster. In fact, most of the second floor has been filled with earth and stone; Siegfried did away with unnecessary space, denying extra methods for would-be intruders to access his lair.

There are, however, three available ways that climbing adventurers can enter the mansion. The first is by smashing through the stained glass window into the main hall (A2). The second is going down the chimney leading to the dining hall's fireplace (A5). The third is climbing to the peak of the estate, the top of the alchemy lab (A10), where they can enter through an open ceiling hatch.

Lightning Strikes. Traversing the top of the tower is highly dangerous: lightning frequently strikes the metal apparatuses. As an adventurer climbs over, roll 1d6; on a 6, lightning strikes the top of the tower. Adventurers caught in the blast must make a DC 15 Dexterity save, taking 8d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a success.

Ward of Radiance

Ribbons of pale light, like a miniature version of the Northern Lights, surround the tower as well. These lights are projections of pure radiant energy. Climbers in close

proximity to these lights may feel an uncomfortable warmth coming from inside of them or restless energy, but nothing debilitating. Fiends and undead, however, feel a searing pain when close to these lights, taking 1d6 radiant damage per turn and must make a DC 15 Wisdom save or be frightened for 1 minute.

Area A1 – The Great Doors

A pair of towering silvery doors act as the main entrance into the manse, leading to the main hall (area A2). Their shining silvery surfaces act as two great mirrors that show the reflection of anyone approaching.

As the adventurers approach the doors they hear a booming voice that asks them the following riddle:

Always running
Never walking
Sometimes babbles
But never talking
What am I?
(The answer is a river.)

Alternatively, replace this riddle with any other that you'd like, or a different puzzle entirely. Or, if you're not fond of riddles/puzzles at all, the doors can ask for a password, or state of intent, before allowing entry.

If the adventurers do not answer to the door's satisfaction, they do not open. Any attempt to force the doors open causes the doors -- which are actually **2 mimics** (MM p220) -- to attack.

The two silvery doors suddenly fly out of the door frame towards you. Their flat surfaces quickly stretch and warp into giant gaping maws with long, powerful tongues curling back as if readying itself to swat at you.

In combat, the mimics attack with their pseudopod "tongue." Once the target is grappled, the mimic reels in the target for a vicious bite (attacks with advantage due to its Grappler trait). The mimics have been tasked with guarding the entrance and fight to the death, but do not chase fleeing adventurers outside of the grove clearing.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 900 XP equally among the characters if the party answers the riddle or defeats the mimics.

Area A2 – Main Hall

The main hall can be accessed by passing through the great doors (A1), the west parlor (A3), the dining hall (A4), or smashing through the stained glass windows (see "Climbing the Walls").

The ruinous remains of fine marble pillars line the hallway here; some toppled over, others reaching up to the vaulted ceiling but coming short of the top. Hollow suits of armor are on display along the wall, standing vigil with their hollow gauntlets wrapped around ceremonial blades.

Bursting through the center of the hall is a cylindrical stone tower. Only a portion of the tower is contained in this hallway: its wall extends beyond the main hall, and it ascends beyond the ceiling.

High above, rain courses in dark rivulets down the stained glass windows above the main doorway. In the crash of lightning, the stained glass casts the chamber in flashes of red and violet.

Paired doors stand to your left and right. Across the hall, a shiny brass door offers a way inside the tower.

The door to the left leads to the west parlor (A3), the door to the right leads to the dining hall (A5), and finally up ahead leads into the tower's staircase (A9).

Each step causes the old eroding wooden floor to creak ominously. Six suits of armor on display have engravings of moon motifs and of soaring herons. They are rusted and are littered with dust and cobwebs. Three of the suits of armor on display are in fact haunted guardians: **animated armors** (MM p19) (PICTURE) holding **flying swords** (MM p20); they are indistinguishable from mundane items unless a character can detect magic. Siegfried cast *prestidigitation* to make them look old and unused.

A character investigating the brass doorway into the tower notices a small nearly invisible message on the door. A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes this as a *glyph of warding* spell, but not what type. The font is tiny and requires getting close to read it. The message says, "read this out loud."

Shouldn't Have Done That

If a character says the message out loud, it triggers the *explosive runes*, releasing a 20-foot radius explosion of electricity from the glyph. Each creature caught in the explosion must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d8 lightning damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one.

If the explosive runes are triggered or dispelled, the **3 animated armors** holding **3 flying swords** immediately come to life and attack the party, fighting until destroyed.

Developments

Unless the party is deliberately being quiet, the vampire Lambert hears them. He uses his scroll of *disguise self* to look like a human cathar and begins shouting for help from inside the west parlor (A3).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 800 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the animated armors and flying swords.

Area A3 – West Parlor

The west parlor is connected to the main hall (A2).

Decades of neglect has deteriorated what was once a cheerful parlor. Baby-blue walls hold the slashed and torn remnants of old family portraits. Elegant chairs with poofy cushions surround a small wooden circular table, engravings of majestic stags run laps along its edges. A bookcase cover the western wall.

Lambert Spinne, a **vampire warrior** (APPENDIX B), resides in this small room.

Illusions and Trickery

If the PCs made a commotion either by fighting the mimics at the entrance (A1) or make noise inside the main hall (A2), Lambert uses one of his scrolls of *disguise self* to take the appearance of a human cathar before calling out for help. If this happens and the adventurers open the door, and if they have a light source, read or paraphrase:

Standing inside the room is a man that appears to be in his mid 30's. He is decked head to toe in the studded leathers of a combat-ready cathar, a mix of white and brown, topped with a leather tri-corner hat.

"Thank Avacyn, someone has come! Please, help! The madman owner of this house has kept me prisoner here, says he plans to experiment on me. Please, before his foul minions arrive!"

Lambert speaks the truth: Siegfried is indeed keeping him prisoner for future experiments. He's certainly withholding information, however. If questioned, the vampire disguised as a cathar keeps repeating that he'll explain everything once he's free, that they must hurry before patrols come.

Trapped

The vampire explains what is keeping him here: it is not a physical barrier, but a magical one. He points to a straight unbroken line of silver powder on the ground under the doorway. He hurries them in an anxious voice to wipe away the line of powder so that he can escape.

The powdered silver radiates an aura of magic (abjuration). Inquisitive characters can make a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) or (Religion) check to recognize the line of powdered silver as a magic circle against evil. The magic circle binds Lambert; he cannot cross the line's boundary until the line is broken, nor can he disturb the line himself.

Anyone other than the vampire can dispel the magic circle by simply breaking the line of powdered silver, for example sweeping it away with their foot.



Art by James Ryman

Lambert's True Self

If they catch Lambert unaware, see through his illusion, or the vampire spawn drops his *disguise self* spell, they instead see a gaunt, pale-skinned man in fine aristocratic clothing that looks straight out of a Victorian nobel's wardrobe: a vest of red and gold, high black leather boots, a black high-collared cape that is red on the inside. Lambert's striking eyes; golden irises in a pool of black sclera, are a telltale sign of vampirism, glinting in the darkness like a cat's. (PICTURE)

Like most vampires, Lambert has a smug sense of superiority over mortals, which he compares his own kind as "shepherds watching over our sheep." He acts with restraint towards the characters, which he respects to some degree for making it this far. He watches them with curiosity and amusement.

Interview With The Vampire

If the adventurers don't fall for his ruse, Lambert changes tactics. Instead of relying on the characters' good will, he entices them with money, power, and information. He explains that he is from a very rich and influential family, the Voldaren vampires. Lambert guarantees that the characters will be handsomely rewarded if they free him.

If the characters are willing to negotiate his release for information, wealth, or power, Lambert has one request: step into his parlor. A character (one or more) has to sit down at the table with him during the talks as a sign of good faith. He gives his word that he will not harm anyone

that enters the room so long as they do not attack him.

What Lambert Knows

Lambert is willing to barter information for his release. He has only been a vampire for two years now and does not know any secrets that would be left for Voldaren elders, but he can readily answer any general questions about Stensia and Innistrad that an average citizen would know.

In addition, he has juicy bits of information that the characters may be interested in:

- He participated in Katarina's abduction (see "Voldaren's Lesson" in the Introduction) and her subsequent "crowning" as a mock "Queen of the Vampires," but was not permitted to feast on her at the celebrations' end, "unfortunately there's only so much blood to go around."
- The vampire families were disturbed when they found out about the zombie horde laying waste to the countryside. They followed the corpse wagons (and destroyed the zombies pulling them) back to Mauer Estate
- Lambert was sent to spy on Siegfried, but the Estate is incredibly well protected against vampires: he specifically mentions the strange aura of radiant energy surrounding the tower which "seared my flesh as I approached"
- The vampire was eventually caught by Siegfried and is now kept here for future experiments

Developments

If Lambert tricks the adventurers into breaking the magic circle against evil with his disguise, keeps up his act long enough for him to break from the party and escape. He isn't looking for a fight, instead hoping to return home as quickly as possible.

If the adventurers see through his ruse and agree to negotiate for his release by entering his room, Lambert keeps his word of not harming them. He can promise them riches for his release, within reason -- treat his promised riches as a Treasure Horde CR 5 (DMG p137) to see what he can and cannot give. If they agree on a price and free the vampire, a week later a package arrives to the characters with the promised items.

Or he can promise a favor from his brethren: what that favor ends up being is up to you. For example, he could put in a good word towards the vampire elders, should any character wish to become "gifted" with vampirism. Other favors could be free passage alongside Voldaren's territories, or a promise not to feast on people living in a specific village for a full year.

If the characters refuse to release him, the vampire shouts insults at them as they leave, warning them that when he is freed he and his brethren will hunt the party down and devour them for their insolence. He may show up in the future with a few vampires to attack the party.

If pressed into combat, Lambert's only hope is to fight them inside his room, as the vampire has no ranged capabilities. But he can get out of line of sight easily, hiding in corners of the room so that anyone looking to attack him would have to enter to get a clear shot.

Secret Room

The bookcase is filled with books ranging from a variety of topics, including history, biology, geography, etc. A DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) both reveals a sliding mechanism around the bookcase and that one book, *"Camoflage and Its Practical Applications,"* stands out amongst the rest. Pulling on the book swings the bookcase open, revealing a hidden room (A4).

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,800 XP equally among the characters if the speaks with and/or destroys Lambert.

Treasure

The vampire was stripped of most notable possessions, but he managed to keep two scrolls of *disguise self* hidden inside his boots.

Most of the dusty tomes on the bookcase are valuable (10-30gp each), but two are particularly noteworthy:

The Sacred Waters of Sumnerryl, describes the location of an ancient sinkhole hidden away in province Kessig whose waters are rumored to contain mystical powers. It would be worth 150gp to the druids of Kessig, plus could be a hook for a future adventure.

Fall From Glory is actually a hollowed out book holding a golden hourglass. The "sand" of the hourglass is powdered ruby. The hourglass is worth 400gp to the right (extremely wealthy) buyer.

Area A4 - Hidden Room

This room is accessed via a secret doorway in the parlor (A3). None of Mauer Estate's current inhabitants know about this room, making it the perfect spot for adventurers to rest. A lever on a wall inside the room opens and closes the secret entrance.

A font bubbles in the middle this small room, its silver liquid sparkling with fair dawn's light. Encircling its broad base is a mosaic depicting a silver heron and a dark fiendish goat in eternal chase. An inscription is written on the font's rim.

Font of Bennu

This blessed font is said to grant knowledge through visions to those who partake without avarice. The inscription on the font's rim reads in Celestial, "A blessing for the righteous; a curse for avarice." Anyone who drinks from the font experiences a vision of the past and potentially the future. The imbiber gains a bit of magical potential, whose benefit that character can activate at a time of their choosing. Once activated, the benefit is expended.

A character who drinks from the fountain more than once is afflicted with the disfavor of Bennu. The character does not receive the font's benefit, instead gaining a level of exhaustion.

When a character drinks from the font for the first time, roll 1d4 and consult the following list. You can also improvise or create specific visions, perhaps revealing additional story information that hints at future adventures beyond this one.

1. Vision of Sacrifice: The character witnesses a massive black rupture in the sky, fiends and other horrors emerging from it. A glowing heron flies into the portal and erupts into a mist of silver. There is a blinding flash of light which then dims to reveal the silver moon of Innistrad.

Benefit: As a reaction, the character can claim this benefit when an ally they can see within 30 feet of them takes damage, taking that damage instead and negating half of it.

2. Vision of Past Valor: The characters witness a scene of Avacyn fighting with an equally powerful demon (Griselbrand), the Helvault standing in the background.

Benefit: As a free action, the character can claim this benefit to take an additional bonus action.

3. Vision of Inspiration: This vision shows the Church of Avacyn at the height of its power, humans and angels working together to drive the horrors away from their lands.

Benefit: As a free action, the character can claim this benefit to gain an inspiration point.

4. Vision of Future Glory: This vision shows a huge silver mass (the Helvault) standing at the center of a garden. The object explodes with a flash of radiance and an army of devils stream out.

Benefit: As a free action, the character can claim this benefit to gain an additional Dash action.

Area A5 – Dining Hall

A vaulted hall stretches before you, anchored by a great stone fireplace on one end and a wall decked in old ceremonial swords on the other. Between them are three long tables capable of seating an entire company. Rotting body parts are heaped on the tables in great hideous piles: arms, legs, heads, and other parts. Old wooden bowls, drinking horns, and knives are strewn about the floor mixed in with debris.

The stone tower at the center of the manse cuts a swath into this hall, jutting out of a corner. A dumbwaiter has been built into the tower, its metal cart suspended by thick ropes.

The dining hall can be accessed by the main hall (A2), the kitchen (A6), or through the fireplace (see "Climbing the Walls").

The corpses littering the tables have been brought here from the corpse wagons sitting in the stables (A6). Shilgengar, the **demonlord of ashmouth** (Appendix B) and his five **crawling claw** helpers (MM p44) work here day and night. They chop up the corpses into body parts and sort them into piles (head, arms, legs, torso, hands, feet) on the tables.

The shaft on the tower wall is a dumbwaiter: it leads from the dining hall to the top of the tower (A10) where Siegfried works. Periodically, a quasit from the top of the tower (A10) calls down the shaft of the dumbwaiter for a specific body part. Shilgengar and his helpers fill the cart with the body part, then the demon turns a crank that lifts the cart up to the tower with ropes on pulleys.

Shilgengar has been commanded by a powerful archdemon to aid Siegfried with his projects and push him further towards utter madness. While the taskmaster has been overseeing supplying Siegfried with body parts, his accomplice, the quasit Qarr (A10), whispers fiendish suggestions in the stitcher's ear.

Shilgengar relishes the chance to inflict pain on any invaders. If taken below 20 hit points, the demon tries to retreat, ideally by flying up the dumbwaiter shaft and warning Siegfried (A10). If killed, the demonlord's essence dissolves and reforms inside the pits of ashmouth months or years later, ready to enact his vengeance on the adventurers.

Going Up The Dumbwaiter

A crank operates the dumbwaiter, raising or lowering the metal crate inside the shaft. Turning the crank requires a Strength check: the DC is 5 for an empty crate, up to 15 when it's at maximum capacity. An adventurer can operate the crank while the rest of the party is in the crate to send them up the shaft.

Alternatively, adventurers can climb up the shaft. Climbing the thick ropes attached to the crate requires at DC 10 Strength check. They can also climb the walls, but the smooth surface makes it difficult to find grips, requiring a DC 15 Strength check. Failure by 5 or more means the character loses grip and falls.

The dumbwaiter goes up 50 feet to the top of the tower, the alchemist's lab (A10).

Art by Dan Scott



Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,850 XP equally among the characters if the party destroys the barlgura and the five crawling claws.

Treasure

If defeated, adventurers can pick up the *butcher's cleaver* (APPENDIX A) left on one of the tables.

The corpses thrown into this room weren't thoroughly searched. A diligent investigation of the corpses finds two platinum rings (75gp each); a pouch containing 15 cp, 13 ep, and a *potion of vitality*; and a disembodied hand clutching a *wand of magic missiles*.

Area A6 - Kitchen

Adventurers can enter the kitchen either through the dining hall (A5) or through Eudora's secret tunnel, (see "Lady of the Woods") which leads to a hidden doorway behind a cabinet in the kitchen.

Four **charmbreaker devils** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE) in this kitchen are currently having a crisis: Shilgengar, the demonic taskmaster in the adjacent dining hall (A5) has demanded that they cook him a meal. The fiend has not been pleased with the devils' disastrous attempts at cooking and threatens to annihilate them if they do not satisfy him with their next dish.

Unless the adventurers were exceptionally loud in an adjacent room, for example casting *thunderwave*, the fiends here are so preoccupied smashing things that they don't hear even the sounds of battle.

As the adventurers approach the kitchen, they hear:

You hear a commotion coming from beyond the door: ceramics shattering, metal plates clanging on the stone floor, and anxious guttural shrieks and barks of multiple creatures.

Characters that understand the Abyssal language can make out what the shrieks and barks are saying: "We need more of the green sauce!" "What about more shoe?" "I don't know!" "This is hopeless! Shilgengar is gonna kill us!" "We don't even have taste buds, for Grazz't's sake!"

If they look inside the kitchen:

You see four humanoid creatures leaping around a kitchen. Their sinewy red bodies are armored by wicked chitinous spikes that adorn their body, from the back-swept horns on their head to their long prehensile tails. They frantically rummage through dusty cabinets and shelves, carelessly knocking pots and plates over as though searching for something in particular.

Iron Chef

When the charmbreaker devils spot the adventurers, they quickly try to bargain with them before the adventurers attack:

"Wait!" One of the devils speaks to you in broken Common, "you help us, we help you! Yes? You cook, yes?"

If the adventurers are willing to listen, the devils explain their situation trying to cook for Shilgengar. If the characters help them cook a good meal, the devils will spike the meal with a ***potion of sleep,*** which will put the taskmaster into a deep sleep. This arrangement would benefit both parties: the PCs can walk past Shilgengar undisturbed, while the charmbreaker devils get a much-needed break from cooking.

The kitchen has a wide array of ingredients that range from reasonable to awful: ripe apples, a human hand, a worn-out shoe, cinnamon, vials of newt spittle, a rabbit, a hag's eye, ground pepper, a barrel filled with red wine, and anything else you want to add. The devils have a stew heating over a wood-burning stove that has the shoe floating in water.

Should they take the devils' offer, the adventurers must cook a meal out of the ingredients. The devils have no

taste buds but will nonetheless attempt to help: "What about more shoe?" "Ew, apples? They don't have any blood in them!" "Lemme give you a hand (waving around the human hand)"

The adventurer's end of the bargain is fulfilled once they've tasted the finished meal and convince the devils that it is tasty. Characters that lie about the food's taste must make a Charisma (Deception) check opposed to the fiends' Wisdom (Insight) so the devils don't catch them on it.

Developments

If the party fulfills their end of the deal, the devils spike the food and drink with a potion of sleep before heading up to present the meal to Shilgengar. If the food is acceptable, the demonlord quickly consumes all of it and promptly goes to sleep. If unhappy with the food, however, Shilgengar enters a horrible rage and attacks the devils, which cause them to try and flee.

The charmbreaker devils defend themselves if the adventurers attack, giving up on attempts to bargain. If two devils are killed, the remaining devils attempt to flee into the dining hall (A5) and inform Shilgengar of intruders, joining him in battle.

Area A7 - Stables

The open-air stables are attached to the eastern wall of Mauer Estate. The corpse wagons brought back from the zombie horde are found here, most of them now empty. Four **zombies** (MM p311) are hauling the last corpses from the wagons into the estate through adjacent double doors into the dining hall (A5), dumping them on the floor for Ugbug and his helpers to sort out.

Like the other zombies outside, they are totally indifferent to the characters unless attacked. Adventurers can enter the dining hall from here without any hassle.

Treasure

Amongst the leftovers in the wagons are three diamonds hidden in dirty rags (100 gp each); a *potion of flying* in a stoppered vial inside a corpse's pant pocket; and 23 gp and 35 sp scattered atop the wagons.

Area A8 - Cellar

The cellar's entrance juts out from the north wall of the estate. Wooden double doors lead down underneath the mansion.

A short flight of stone steps leads down into the cellar floor. Guttering torchlight casts long shadows on the arched stone ceiling. The east and west walls are lined with five-foot-wide cells, each sealed with an iron barred door and fitted with a nasty heap of straw.

The central region of the room is a well-stocked torture chamber. Chains and ropes hang from a tangle of pulleys and hooks set in the ceiling, some ending in manacles and others in clamps or cruel hooks of their own. A rack and an iron maiden round out the chamber's morbid furnishings.

On the southern wall, blocked by kegs and barrels, is a large wooden door reinforced and barred with thick iron. An eerie purple light seeps through the cracks and crevices of the door.

This chamber is where Siegfried keeps most of his prisoners for interrogation and future experiments. If any characters is captured in Mauer Estate, they eventually end up naked and imprisoned in one of these cells. Adding a prisoner NPC that has ties to a future adventure you have planned can be a great hook to move from this story to the next.

A **bearded devil** (MM p70) named Terilanyx and a **lemure** (MM p76) named "Nattdaymon" -- the only gibberish "word" it can say -- sit on a pile of loot comprised of all prisoners' belongings while playing a card game. The bearded devil is obviously bored and frustrated at having the nearly brain-dead lemure as its only opponent, wishing it had a real challenge. A clever and persuasive character may be able to convince the devil into releasing him/her from the cell to play a game.

Cell Doors. The cell doors feature locks requiring thieves' tools and a successful DC 13 Dexterity check to pick. The doors can also be wrenched open by brute force with a successful DC 22 Strength check.

Hostage Situation

If adventurers come here to rescue an ally, consider having the imprisoned character used as a hostage by Terilanyx, perhaps already restrained on the rack. The devil threatens to kill the prisoner if the adventurers make a wrong move.

If the bearded devil has no hostages to leverage, it and the lemure fight to the best of their abilities.

Developments

If a character is imprisoned here, they can either be freed by other party members, or by coming up with ways to free themselves.

The spooky southern door leads to the catacombs, which is an opportunity to continue beyond this adventure (see "Conclusion"). If they're adamant about opening the door and you don't wish it to lead anywhere, make it a small storage room with a **flameskull** (MM p134) instead.

Treasure

The pile of loot that the lemure and bearded devil sat on has all of the imprisoned character's equipment along with the equipment of previous prisoners: amongst the junk are five javelins, two spears, a shortsword two longswords, a light crossbow, studded leathers, and two quivers holding twenty crossbow bolts each. There is one standout amongst the pile: *demonmail hauberk* (APPENDIX A).

Hidden inside the straw pile of an empty cell is a silver earring set with a tiny ruby (30gp) and a banded gold ring dotted with emeralds (50gp). Characters searching the straw pile finds them both with a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

The barrels contain salted pork and beef, flour, sugar, apples, and ale.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,065 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats the lemure and bearded devil.

Area A9 - Tower Staircase

A 10-foot wide, spiraling stone staircase starts at the main hall (A2) and goes up 50 feet to the alchemy lab (A10). Sconces along the wall hold burning torches, keeping the staircase brightly lit.

(Warning! Below is a deliciously evil trap that sadistic DMs will get a kick out of. However, if the characters are already at low health, it may be best to skip/nerf this trap as the results may be lethal.)

Slip n' Slide of Doom

Mechanical trap

Of the 60 steps in the staircase, step 30 and 40 are both pressure plates. When 20 or more pounds of pressure are placed on either of this trap's pressure plates, a chain of events happen:

- all the stone steps in the staircase flip over, transforming into a ramp covered in slippery grease
- the sconces drop the burning torches, lighting the grease on fire
- finally, a hidden trapdoor in the ceiling at the top of the staircase opens, releasing a 10-foot diameter rolling sphere of solid stone down the ramp, picking up the flaming grease as it rolls so it becomes a fiery boulder of doom

With a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check, a character notices some grease seeping through the outline of each step, and scrapes along the walls. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check spots a pressure plate or trapdoor if they have vision of it. A search of the floor accompanied by a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals variations in the mortar and stone that betray the pressure plate's presence. The same check while inspecting the ceiling at the top of the stairs reveals the trapdoor. Wedging an iron spike or other object under the pressure plates prevents the trap from activating (or just step over it).

When the trap is activated, all creatures standing on the stairs must immediately make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw as the staircase flips over and turns into a slippery ramp. On a failed save, the character falls prone and slides down the ramp, sliding 30 feet per round. A character that successfully saves may still need to make additional Dexterity saving throws if creatures above the character are sliding down into him/her.

After the stairs flip over into a greasy ramp, the sconces drop the torches, lighting the grease on fire. Characters standing in the flames take 1d4 fire damage at the start of each of its turns. Characters that fell prone and are drenched in grease catch fire, taking 1d6 fire damage of each of its turns and require a DC 13 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames.

Finally, once the stairs turn into a flaming greasy ramp, all affected creatures must roll initiative. The sphere rolls initiative with a +8 bonus. On its turn, it rolls 50 feet down the ramp. The sphere can move through creatures' spaces, and creatures can move through its space, treating it as difficult terrain Whenever the sphere enters a creature's space or a creature enters its space while it's rolling, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 4d10 bludgeoning damage and an additional 1d6



Art by Rob Alexander

fire damage and be knocked prone. The sphere stops when it hits a wall at the bottom of the staircase or similar barrier.

Developments

If the trap is triggered, the staircase stays on fire until doused or naturally dies out after a minute once all the grease is burned. When the grease is cleared, walking up the ramp isn't difficult.

A triggered trap causes a big ruckus, informing Siegfried of intruders.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,800 XP equally among the characters if the party disarms, purposefully avoids, or triggers the slip n' slide of doom.

Area A10 – Alchemy Lab

At the top of the tower is the alchemy lab. Siegfried has spent the last few months here, working relentlessly day and night on his experiments. His foul work has attracted a small following of demons that are interested in seeing his goals realized. The fiends aid in his work and whisper dark secrets in his ear, pushing the alchemist towards greater acts of depravity.

Siegfried is currently at the cusp of completing his grandest achievement yet: he is about to give life to a new, immensely powerful being of his own design (The Egg; see below), which the alchemist hopes will lead his army of undead against the vampire families.

Galvanizing Life

To wake his new creations, the mad scientist must bestow upon them "the spark of life," which requires a tremendous amount of power.

Siegfried has built a complex device called a *galvanizer* -- a machine of sprawling tubes, wires, coils, and lightning rods that covers his entire lab from floor to rooftop -- to provide this power. Siegfried uses the *galvanizer* to create the raging storm overhead, collecting the electricity from the lightning strikes to "shock" his creations to life.

The Egg

An open ceiling hatch exposes the laboratory to the raging storm above. A metal platform is raised up to the opening, with a huge, slimy purple egg strapped on top of the platform. The Egg rhythmically expands and contracts like a beating heart.

Attacking The Egg. The Egg has 60 hit points. If attacked, it releases a psychic scream of pain, immediately alerting everyone in the laboratory.

Hatching The Egg. A lightning vane (fancy lightning rod) attached to the platform can be raised up into the storm, channeling lightning strikes into The Egg. Raising the lightning vane this way requires an action to turn a crank. Each round the lightning vane is raised, lightning strikes it, jolting The Egg. After five lightning strikes, The Egg hatches into **The Thing** (APPENDIX B) (PICTURE).

The Thing's immediate desire is to escape the laboratory. It only attacks people in its way, including Siegfried. If reduced to half its hit points, The Thing tears off the roof and attempts to flee into the wilderness.

Entering The Laboratory

The adventurers are most likely to enter through the staircase (A9) that connects the lab to the main hall. Alternatively, they may be entering through the open hatch in the ceiling, or up the dumbwaiter (A5). Whichever way they enter, read or paraphrase the following as their first glance inside:

The misty interior of the laboratory glows with a flickering radiance and hums with power. Metal rods and spheres jutting from the floors and ceilings are awash in electricity. A jungle of glass tubes and metal wires sprawl all over the floor, walls, and ceiling, connecting the strange contraptions found here with everything else.

An open ceiling hatch exposes the laboratory to the raging storm above. A metal platform is raised up to the opening, with a huge, slimy purple egg strapped on top of it.

The most notable features of the room to spot are:

- Large glass incubators containing bulky malformed humanoids floating inside luminous greenish-blue liquids; these are **schmelzmen** (APPENDIX B)
- A metal platform with a humanoid figure lying down on it, hidden under a bloodstained sheet; this is a **flesh golem** (MM p169)
- A second metal platform adorned with lightning rods, raised up to the ceiling hatch and exposed to the thunderstorm above; it holds The Egg

Siegfried is too engrossed in his work to be bothered keeping an eye on the rest of the estate. If the adventurers managed to reach the laboratory without triggering the trap in the staircase (A9), no one warned Siegfried of intruders (A5), and The Egg doesn't scream, use the *Caught Unaware* scenario below. If Siegfried is warned of the party's presence, use the *Ready for Action* scenario instead.

Caught Unaware



Art by Jason Felix

Siegfried (APPENDIX B) paces through the laboratory, making sure everything is running smoothly and he barking orders to his homunculus assistant, **Oglor** (APPENDIX B). Qarr, a **quasit** (MM 63), observes invisibly from a corner. The fiend is alert for trouble and actively scans the area (Passive Perception 15); ironically, Qarr is rather skittish around creations that have a habit of randomly springing to life and causing the poor quasit a bit of a scare.

A man in a long white coat strides excitedly through the laboratory, flipping switches and turning knobs with his thick rubber gloves, pausing only for a moment to watch their effects. He barks orders across the room at small green-skinned humanoid, who's "head" is a giant eyeball encased in a bronze helmet with a large telescope lens to peer out of. "The storm is ready to harness! Oglor, increase the rotational speed of the flux capacitor to eighty percent!"

The adventurers have a surprise round if none of the lab's occupants notice them.

Ready For Action

If alerted to the adventurer's presence ahead of time, then Siegfried, Qarr, and Oglor are on alert for intruders, each of them gaining +5 to their Passive Perception to catch anyone trying to sneak in.

Combat!

Siegfried is convinced that the adventurers are either vampires or servants of them. It would take a tremendous effort to talk him out of a fight. He starts the fight with *mage armor* already cast on himself.

Flipping Switches. Once combat begins, Siegfried's primary goal is to distract the adventurers long enough for The Egg to hatch. He runs across the lab to flip two switches: the first animates the schmelzmen and the second animates the flesh golem. He can flip one switch as per turn as a free action. He prefers to start combat by casting *invisibility*, since flipping switches does not break the spell.

Here is a general sequence of actions that Siegfried will take during combat, along with sample dramatic banter the mad scientist likes to engage in. Siegfried in this crazed state is based heavily off Victor Frankenstein in popular culture. The mad scientist also engages in dramatic banter:

- **1st Round:** Siegfried casts *invisibility* on himself and taunts the adventurers. He flips a switch, sending a pulse of electricity that shatters the incubators, animating three **schmelzmen** (APPENDIX B) that immediately attack the party
- *"So the Voldarens have managed to breach my sanctum. You've come just in time, bloodsuckers: witness the fruits of my labor!"*
- **2nd Round:** Siegfried flips the second switch, sending a massive pulse of electricity that animates the **narstad scrapper** (APPENDIX B), which immediately attacks the party. Siegfried also instructs Oglor to raise the lightning vane.
- *"Behold! I create life with the flip of a switch! I am a GOD!"*
- *"The storm has reached peak potency! Oglor, raise the lightning vane!"*

Siegfried only engages the adventurers directly if they attack The Egg or are clearly gaining the upper hand in the battle. Siegfried fearlessly defends his life's work, casting his most powerful spells to fight off the adventurers and fighting to the death if he must.

"NO! I have worked too hard to see my dreams ruined by the likes of you! I will have my revenge!"

Oglor raises the lightning vane when commanded to by turning a crank (see "The Egg"). Oglor avoids combat as long as no one interferes with its task.

Qarr is not a fighter and is content to observe while invisible.

Developments

This battle is quite dangerous. In the event that the party is defeated, Siegfried imprisons the surviving characters in the cellar (A8) for future interrogation and experiments.

If defeated and taken captive, Siegfried's madness cannot be fixed in an instant (though a *wish* spell or similar powerful magic might). Bringing him back to sanity is certainly possible, but the healing process takes time and effort. The best immediate effect an adventurer can hope for is to at least calm him down.

Oglor is loyal to Siegfried, its master. However, if Siegfried is slain, it views his killer as its new master. Oglor can't speak, but it tries to convey its wish to serve through gestures.

Qarr, while seemingly working under Siegfried as well, actually serves a more powerful archdemon; who that mysterious patron is up to you. The quasit was tasked to corrupt Siegfried by this patron. At your discretion, Qarr may offer to serve as a familiar to one of the party members, tempting the character with power/info/wealth as appropriate, with a hidden agenda to keep tabs on the party's movements. Or the quasit may try to escape and inform the mysterious patron on the adventurers' actions – up to you!

Should the tubes, wires, coils, and other machinery that the galvanizer consists of be significantly damaged from area of effect spells or direct attacks (your discretion), or if the adventurers manage to switch it off, then the thunderstorm disperses and the radiant wards surrounding the tower fade away.

If you wish to use the NPC Sir Delandel, the Undead Paladin, characters can find him trapped inside a steel incubator. Siegfried found Delandel in Mauer Estate and hooked him up to the galvanizer; he is unwilling the source for the protective radiant wards that surround the tower.

Treasure

Siegfried wears the *electric recombobulator* (APPENDIX A) and has one scroll of each of the following: *alarm, catapult, false life, mage armor, mirror image,* and *lightning bolt*. In addition, Siegfried carries the broken missing piece of the *Strionic Resonator* and a key to a chest.

A chest is tucked underneath Siegfried's work desk. The chest's padlock can be picked using thieves' tools with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. However, the lock is rigged with a poison needle trap that triggers if a character isn't pressing down a concealed button on the side of the chest while opening the chest. The needle and button can both be found with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check and can be disarmed with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. A creature triggering the needle trap is injected with wyvern poison and must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 5d6 poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

The chest contains a silver locket with a picture of a young woman inside (Katarina), a silver torc with soaring herons (80 gp), six moonstones of 50 gp each, 200 sp, 90 gp, and 10 pp.

A thorough search of the room yields several letters to Siegfried from Geralf, a cousin and infamous stitcher currently operating in the Moorland. Geralf's letters reveals an exchange on necro-alchemy information between the two. In the last dated letter, Geralf praises his cousin's brilliance, stating that he put into practice Siegfried's blueprints for a modern "goliath skaab" and it turned out "better than I could ever have hoped." Geralf has named this creation Grimgrin, and invites Siegfried to join him and his sister in Gavony, where they plan to march on Thraben itself soon. If the characters deliver these letters to the proper authorities in Gavony, award the party 4,000 XP.

The laboratory is littered with specialized alchemical tools and devices, glass jars full of pickled organs, anatomical charts for both human and beast, rune-engraved skeletal remains, dozens of tools for inscribing runes on brass and copper plates, and on. In total, the laboratory would be worth 80,000 gp to necro-alchemists in Nephalia, but moving this equipment is highly impracticle and dismantling it by someone not trained in alchemy can easily destroy the fragile equipment.

Awarding Experience Points

Divide 1,800 XP equally among the characters if the party defeats Siegfried and his minions. Award an additional 500 XP if the characters find the missing piece of the *Strionic Resonator*.

Milestone: Level 5!

If you are using Milestone Experience, then the characters attain 5th level as you conclude this adventure!

Conclusion

With hard work and a little luck, the adventurers have defeated Siegfried and undone his destructive plots. All in Stensia will take note of their deeds: the humans of Stensia shall be grateful for years to come, and the vampire families will surely take note of these new heroes as well.

By the end of the adventure, the characters should be 5th level. If your players wish to continue playing their characters, you can use the contents of this setting to

create your own adventures. Innistrad is a world teeming with possibility. Below are some potential hooks to spur your imagination:

Stensia

- explore the hidden catacombs under Mauer Estate, where an ancient order of Paladins used to hide away from the world powerful relics of evil that could not be destroyed
- the vampire families have taken notice of the adventurer's deeds; perhaps they "reward" them for taking care of Siegfried, or perhaps they feel threatened by their power
- adventurers may find out the fate of Katarina: perhaps she wasn't killed, but rather turned into a vampire. Or perhaps she managed to escape the vampires.

Gavony

- Geralf and Gisa are planning to march against Thraben. The Church of Avacyn brushes this news aside, explaining they have more pressing matters.
- The heart of the Skirsdag cult's operations is revealed: Thraben, the seat of the Church itself. Many high priests are in fact cultists in disguise.
- The siege of Thraben happens in earnest, and the adventurers play a crucial role in its defense alongside Thalia.

Kessig

- the people of Kessig have always had a rough relationship with the Church, resenting the Church's disconnect with the realities of this wild place and balking at the "Curfew of Silver." With Avacyn gone, Kessigers are in the midst of a crisis of faith.
- Ferocious howlpacks run wild over Kessig, forcing countless humans to take up residence in walled settlements protected by too few angels and cathars. Sigarda, leader of the Flight of Herons, is in desperate need of heroes to deal with the howlpack alphas.
- With Avacyn's protective spells failing, the druids of Kessig have went back to old, ancient magic of the forest. While they are getting results, rumors abound that sinister sources are behind some of the seemingly "benevolent" nature magic.
- Katarina's uncle, Hanns Reinhart, is one of Innistrad's most venerated astronomers. She had hoped Hanns



would know the secret to using the Strionic Resonator, but he has apparrently disappeared from his home in Kessig after a werewolf attack.

Nephalia

- The adventurers need to locate an important item which is said to be found in Nephalia's seedy underground passages known as The Erdwal
- The Stormkirk vampires are willing to provide a service to the adventurers if they deal with a situation for them: kill the vampire sorceress Jeleva, Nephalia's Scourge.
- Siegfried's alchemical notes repeatedly mention the Strionic Resonator. The only person that can decipher their meanings is the reclusive alchemist in Nephalia; Ludevic of Ulm.
- The Fauchard, an order of human vampire hunters, requests the adventurer's aid for their most dangerous hunt yet.
- Jenrik, irrefutably the most knowledgable astronomer in all of Innistrad, spends his days studying the moon in his glittering tower on the Silver Beach. If anyone can figure out the Strionic Resonator's secrets, it's him.

Planeswalkers

- Sorin Markov seeks the aid of the adventurers in finding Avacyn. The Dark Prince of Innistrad has long ago been banished from Markov Manor, and his vampirism makes it difficult to journey into human settlements. He may ask the adventurers to pay a visit his old ancestral home or follow leads in a human district.
- Liliana Vess has left a path of destruction in her search for the demon Griselbrand. She may strike a deal with the adventurers to help uncover Skirsdag cultists to interrogate about the demon's whereabouts.
- Tamiyo studies Innistrad's silver moon in Nephalia. She may ask the adventurers for assistance locating old tomes about the moon, or aid in her dangerous experiments.

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL ITEMS

SPECIAL PROPERTIES

The following are materials that have special properties in the world of Innistrad.

BLESSED SILVER

Pure silver that has been ritually blessed by a powerful cleric of Avacyn is called blessed silver. According to alchemists, silver's purity of material readily absorbs divine magic. Blessed silver is used as protective warding against evil creatures, weaving it into clothing or engraving the material into door frames to keep spirits out.

Arrowheads, spearpoints, and other weapons made from blessed silver can be powerful instruments for fighting evil creatures, especially werewolves. Smiths capable of forging such weapons are called silversmiths, usually clergy that are trained in the art of weapon-making, or a weaponsmith working alongside clergy. Certain blessings must be said at certain times during the forging process to properly imbue the silver weapon with divine magic. Because of the difficulty of imbuing silver with strong magic, and its usefulness against the growing threat of werewolves, silversmiths are particularly revered in their communities.

A weapon made of blessed silver has a +1 bonus to attack rolls against lycanthropes, fiends, and undead. A lycanthrope struck by this weapon takes an extra 1d6 radiant damage.

LIVING WOOD

Although vampires can be harmed or killed by any weapon, living wood have special efficacy. This is dubbed the Dryad's Legacy (dead wood is inert, no more effective than stone or steel.) Newly cut wood has this property for only a day or two before becoming inert.

Human settlements that are close to vampires make sure to have close access to living wood in an attempt to fend off attacks. This is especially true in province Stensia, where many powerful vampire families live. In small villages, the cottages are usually around a small grove of hawthorn trees for centralized access to living wood. In larger villages, the cottages themselves are often built around a hawthorn, with the tree's trunk in the center of the common room and its leaves above the roof.

A weapon made of living wood deals an extra 1d6 damage to vampires. If a piercing weapon made of living wood is driven into the vampire's heart, the vampire is destroyed.



ART BY JASON FELIX

MAGIC ITEMS

Loot Cards. All the new magic items in this adventure also come with card handout versions that you can download here. They fit perfectly in a Magic card sleeve on top of a random Magic card. Cursed items have an additional innocent-looking version you can use until the curse is fully revealed; for example, when the party acquires Elbrus, the Binding Blade, you can give them Shapshifter's Blade until they discover the true nature of the weapon.

Cursed Items. Some of the magic items described here are cursed. Most methods of identifying items, including the ***identify*** spell, fail to reveal such a curse, although lore might hint at it. A curse should be a surprise to the item's user when the curse's effects are revealed. Cursed items come with two loot cards: a hidden version that doesn't reveal the curse, and then the revealed version that shows what the curse does. It's recommended you only show the receiver of the item the hidden version until they learn exactly what the curse does, then give them the cursed version.

Attunement to a cursed item can't be ended voluntarily unless the curse is broken first, such as with the ***remove curse*** spell.

AVACYN'S COLLAR

LOOT CARD

Wondrous item, common

Hanging from this necklace of blessed silver is a large symbol of Avacyn. The collar can feel immensely heavy or light as a feather, depending on the wearer's feelings towards Avacyn.

Wearing this chain grants a bonus +2 DC to any Channel Divinity class ability the wearer uses that requires a savings throw.

Butcher's Cleaver

LOOT CARD

Weapon (handaxe), rare (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The butcher's cleaver has jagged notches and scrapes all along its blade from heavy use. When it hasn't spilt blood for over a day, the cleaver begins to rapidly deteriorate, its blade becoming dull and lined with rust.

When you deal damage to a creature that has blood with this magic weapon, the cleaver sucks up some of the blood it spills, returning to pristine condition and you regain 1 hit point.

Demonmail Hauberk

LOOT CARDS: HIDDEN, REVEALED

Armor (chain mail), rare (requires attunement)

You have a +2 bonus to AC while wearing this armor. The metal rings composing this hauberk glimmer as if reflecting torchlight and smells faintly of brimstone.

When worn, it fits perfectly on the wearer; like a second skin.The metal rings do not jingle when you move around, so you don't take the usual disadvantage to Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Curse. The Demonmail Hauberk is cursed, a fact that is revealed only when you attune to it. Attuning to the armor curses you: the hauberk merges with your skin, making it impossible to doff without ripping your skin off. The curse can be dispelled if you are targeted by the *remove curse* spell or similar magic, or by physically removing the armor from your body.

Physically removing the armor is a horribly excruciating process. You must deal 10d10 total slashing damage to yourself as you rip the hauberk off your body, tearing your skin off with it. You can take your time removing the armor, dealing a minimum 1d10 damage a time, until you deal the total 10d10 damage to remove the hauberk completely.

Elbrus, the Binding Blade

LOOT CARDS: HIDDEN, REVEALED

Weapon (dagger), legendary (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

Change Form. While attuned to this weapon, you can use a bonus action to change this weapon's form into any other ranged or melee weapon. For example, you can use a bonus action to turn this weapon into a +1 longsword, and then a subsequent bonus action to turn it into a +1 crossbow.

Devour Soul. Whenever you use it to reduce a creature to 0 hit points, Elbrus slays the creature and devours its soul if it has one. A creature whose soul has been devoured by Elbrus can be restored to life only by a *Wish* spell. When it devours a soul, Elbrus grants you temporary hit points equal to twice your character level.

Keep track of how many souls are devoured by Elbrus. For every 6 creatures slain this way, the weapon gains an additional +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Curse. This dagger is cursed, holding the trapped essence of the demon lord Withengar. Becoming attuned to it extends the curse to you. As long as you remain cursed, any time you attack with weapons other than this one, you must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the weapon is unknowingly swapped out with this one, taking the same form of the previous weapon.

Once eighteen creatures have been slain with the Devour Soul ability, the weapon shatters, and Withengar is unleashed. He is a **balor** (MM 55). How Withengar acts after being released from his centuries-long imprisonment is up to you.

Unlike most curses, the trapped essence of Withengar cannot be destroyed by a ***remove curse*** spell. At the DM's discretion, the spell may be sufficient to break the wielder's attunement to the dagger, but far more powerful magic must be employed to destroy the demon lord.

(GM's discretion on what creatures count as having a soul. Most playthroughs counted all humans, spirits, and vampires as having souls, while zombies and skeletons do not. Feel free to change how many souls are needed to release the campaign-altering demon: 18 means it's unlikely to be released during this adventure, so if you want to see it released earlier you can lower it to 13, 7, or whatever else)



Art by Eric Deschamps



Art by James Paick

Electric Recombobulator

LOOT CARD

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

The electric recombobulator is composed of a geist-tank that is connected via alternator tubes to a power gauntlet. The geist tank is typically harnessed to your back, the power gauntlet worn on one hand. The recombobulator has the power to launch the very particles constructing your body through an electric current and reconstruct them magnetically once it reaches it's destination.

Lightning Leap. While wearing the recombobulator, you can use an action to transform yourself into a line of lightning, similar to that created by the *lightning bolt* spell. This line can be of any length from 10 feet to 60 feet. Your body instantly reconstructs at the nearest unoccupied space at the opposite end of the line, along with any gear worn or carried (up to a maximum of your heavy load limit). Each creature in the line must make a

Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 6d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The recombobulator can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

Ghoulcaller's Bell

LOOT CARD

Wondrous item, uncommon

This bell is crafted from the upper half of an imp's skull and molded with iron. The word "grave" is engraved on the skull in Infernal. Its chime is inaudible to the living, but the dead hear it loud and clear.

You can speak the word "grave" in Infernal while holding the ghoulcaller's bell to conjure a fresh human corpse. The bell can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

Ringing the bell allows you to cast *Command* as a 2nd level spell, except it only can affect undead. The bell can't be used this away again until the next dawn.

Message Bottle

Wondrous item, uncommon

When you speak a message into this bottle, the words take on the tangible form of a silvery mist that swirls inside it that can be immediately sealed. Once the bottle is unsealed, the silvery mist escapes and the message is repeated to whomever holds the bottle, then fades away.

Moonsilver Spear

LOOT CARD

Weapon (spear), rare (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon made of *blessed silver*.

Angelic Summons. You can use an action to speak this spear's command word, summoning a guardian angel to smite a foe within 60 feet of you that you can see. The target must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. The target takes 4d6 radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful save. The angel disappears after delivering its strike. This property can't be used again until the next dawn.

Vial of Life's Blood

Potion, uncommon

You regain 6d4+6 hit points when drinking this potion. In addition, whenever a vampire bites you or otherwise drinks your blood, it takes 2d10 acid damage. This effect lasts for an hour.

Violin of Banishing Light

LOOT CARD

Wondrous item, uncommon

This violin is an exquisite example of its kind, perfect in every way. The wood is thinly lined with blessed silver.

While holding the violin, you can use your action to play it and cast the *Daylight* spell with it. To maintain Concentration on the spell, you must additionally make a DC 10 Charisma (Performance) check each round. The violin can't be used this way again until the next dawn.

APPENDIX B: MONSTERS

The following is a list of all the monsters/NPCs the characters may encounter in the adventure, divided by chapters. The monster's statistics are found either in the Monster Manual (page number), otherwise it's included here in this APPENDIX:

CHAPTER 1:
skeleton (272)
swarm of skeletal bats
demonlord of ashmouth
hellrider
ashmouth hound
smoke mephit (217)
shadow (269)
giant spider (328)
giant wolf spider (330)
commoner (345)
werewolf (206)

CHAPTER 2:
guard (347)
thug (350)
cult fanatic (345)
mage (347)
priestess (348)
twig blight (32)
vine blight (32)
poltergeist (279)

CHAPTER 3:
zombie (316)
skeleton (272)
skaab goliath
cult fanatic (345)
guard (347)
priest (348)
specter (279)
thug (350)

CHAPTER 4:
hellhound (182)
will-o'-wisp (301)
grell (172)
shambling mound (270)
commoner (345)
fire geist
vampire spawn warrior

CHAPTER 5:
dryad (121)
zombie (316)
gargoyle (140)
mimic (220)
animated armor (19)
flying sword (20)
vampire spawn (298)
demonlord of ashmouth
crawling claw (44)
charmbreaker devil
bearded devil (70)
lemure (76)
flameskull (134)
schmelzmen
flesh golem (169)
Siegfried
Oglor
quasit (63)
the thing

Ashmouth Hound

Medium elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities fire
Damage Vulnerabilities cold
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage.

Fire Breath. The hound exhales a 15-foot cone of fire. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 8 (2d6 +1) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

PICTURE

Devils and skirsdag cultists create ashmouth hounds by ritually binding fire elementals native to the ashmouth chasm with unwilling canine hosts. The unholy union of elemental and beast causes unending agony to the merged entity as its flames constantly sears its own flesh. The twisted creature's sole purpose is to inflict pain and destruction on others, which is the only fleeting distraction from the agony it endures.

Charmbreaker Devil

Small fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 28 (8d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Infernal
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

Innate Spellcasting. The devil's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The devil can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *vicious mockery*
1/day each: *counterspell, dispel magic, invisibility*

Magic Resistance. The devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The devil makes two melee attacks.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

PICTURE

Though they do not need to eat or drink to survive, charmbreaker devils delight in consuming magic, be it a magic spell, item, or even practitioner. They can smell magical auras and can track their scent within a mile radius. Once the source of the magic is discovered, they will tear it to shreds and gleefully slurp up the magical essence. The more potent the magic source, the greater the feast for the devils.

Demonlord of Ashmouth

Large fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)
Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 44)
Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +4, Cha +2
Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Magic Resistance. The demonlord has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The demonlord makes two attacks with its greataxe.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10+3) slashing damage.

Blight (Recharge 6). A 15-foot-radius cloud of toxic blight extends out from the demonlord. The blight spread around corners. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. While poisoned in this way, a target takes 5 (1d10) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. Emptying a vial of holy water on the target also ends the effect on it.

Stunning Visage (1/Day). Each creature within 20 feet of it that can see it and that isn't a demon must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the demonlord's next turn.

PICTURE

In the strict demon hiearchy, demonlords are near the top, controlling specific regions in Innistrad and commanding lesser devils, demons, and cultists to do their bidding. They work directly under archdemons, coveting their masters' power and planning for the day they can overthrow them.

Shilgengar is the demonlord of the ashmouth region in Stensia. He is famous for creating great famines in the lands, to the point that his horse skull head became a symbol for famine to the people of Innistrad.

Fire Geist

Small undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 45 (6d6 + 6)
Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Fire Form. A creature that touches the fire geist or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage. In addition, the geist can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Illumination. The geist sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

Incorporeal Movement. The geist can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain.

Actions

Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) fire damage. If the target is a creature or flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

A fire geist is the anguished spirit of an individual that died a gruesome death by fire. When they cannot find peace in the Blessed Sleep, or their sleep is disturbed, they manifest in the material world take take out their pain and hate on anyone that dares disturb them.

Hellrider

Small fiend (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6
Damage Immunities poison
Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 9
Languages Abyssal
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The hellrider can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Firebolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) fire damage.

PICTURE

While some fiends prefer malicious pranks and taunting innocents, hellriders revel in bloodshed and destruction. They often serve as shock troops to more powerful fiends, leading the charge into battle atop their ashmouth hound mounts.

Oglor, the Stitched Apprentice

Small construct, neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 28 (8d6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	7 (–2)

Skills Perception +4
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages understands the language of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Keen Sight. Oglor has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Telepathic Bond. While Oglor is on the same plane of existence as its master, it can magically convey what it senses to its master, an the two can communicate telepathically.

Actions

Multiattack. Oglor makes two melee attacks.

Slap *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 0 bludgeoning damage.

PICTURE

A stitcher's apprentice is a special type of homunculus designed to assist skabaren, or "stitchers," in laboratory work. Their giant eyeball "heads" and dextrous hands are perfectly suited for tiny, precise detail work. A master can have only one stitched apprentice at a time, but unlike regular homonculi, a stitcher apprentice does not die when its master dies.

Shared Mind. A stitcher apprentice knows everything its creator knows, including all the languages the creator can speak and read. Likewise, everything the construct senses is known to its master, even over great distances, provided both are on the same plan.

Rinelda Smitt

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Religion +2
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dark Devotion. Rinelda has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. Rinelda Smitt is a 4th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *bane, command, inflict wounds*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Multiattack. Rinelda makes two melee attacks.

Reactions

Redirect Attack. When a creature Rinelda can see targets her with an attack, she chooses a zombie within 5 feet of her. The zombie and Rinelda swap places, and the chosen zombie becomes the target instead.

PICTURE

Rinelda was only six years old when her village was overrun by the undead. Her innate talents at commanding the undead kept her alive, but weren't enough to stop the ravenous ghouls from tearing apart her parents right in front of her eyes. Since then, Rinelda has prided herself as a survivor, wandering the province of Stensia and taking what she wants with her entourage of undead minions.

Recently, the teen necromancer has begun studying under Siegfried, eagerly doing the mad man's bidding and learning as much as she can before she eventually moves to usurp his operations in Mauer Estate.

Schmelzman

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	5 (–3)

Damage Immunities acid, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Burst. When the schmelzman dies, it explodes in a burst of lightning and melted flesh. Each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Regeneration. The schmelzman regains 2 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Actions

Flesh Missile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target.
Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) acid damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

A schmelzman, or "melting man," is a type of undead created by stitchers. While skaabs are the product of month's work of careful preparation, building, and conditioning, schmelzmen are considered rushed products. They are made by melting down the flesh of humanoids in stinking vats filled with acid and foul ingredients, and then animating it with electricity.

A melting man looks vaguely humanoid; its acidic flesh constantly sloughs off its body only to be immediately replaced by its regenerative tissues. The spark that give schemlzmen life is highly unstable and they're prone to explode if damaged, which stitchers generally consider to be a "happy accident."

Skaab Goliath

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8
Hit Points 85 (9d10 + 36)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 9
Languages understands Common but can't speak
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) bludgeoning damage.

PICTURE

Skaabs are Innistrad's version of Frankenstein's Monster. They are alchemically vivified constructions of flesh, made from various anatomical parts of corpses, stitched together and bound with binding plates, and filled with vital fluid. Compared to zombies risen by ghoulcallers, skaabs require far more work to create but result in stronger, calmer, and more trainable creatures.

Skaabs Goliaths are the largest category of skaabs, made from the body parts of at least a dozen corpses. They are the ultimate zombie for physical labor, from carrying huge supplies to knocking down reinforced gates.

Swarm of Skeletal Bats

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Damage Resistances piercing, slashing
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Echolocation. The swarm can't use its blindsight while deafened.

Keen Hearing. The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checkes that rely on hearing.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny bat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) piercing damage. or 2 (1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Scholars have long speculated why bats in Stensia are prone to animate as skeletons, gathering themselves together into vicious swarms with an insatiable hunger for the living. It could be that the bats are naturally prone to the evil necromantic energy that infuses the land -- though they're just as likely to be the product of vampires, created to control specific roads or simply for amusement.

Siegfried

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3
Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Medicine +3, Religion +3
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Abyssal, Common, Celestial, Infernal, Primordial
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Special Equipment. Siegfried has the *electric recombobulator* and two scrolls of *mage armor*.

Spellcasting. Siegfried is a 6th-level spellcaster that uses Intelligence as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Siegfried has the following spells prepared from the wizard spell list:
Cantrips (at will): *mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb, grease, shield, thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility, mirror image, misty step*
3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, dispel magic, lightning bolt*

Actions

Lightning Leap (1/day). Siegfried transforms into a line of lightning 5 feet wide and any length between 10 to 60 feet, then instantly reappears at the nearest unoccupied space at the opposite end of the line. Each creature in the line must make a DC 13 saving throw, taking 28 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Scalpel. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

PICTURE

Once an alchemist living in Shadowgrange, Siegfried dedicated his life to protecting his people from the supernatural horrors of Innistrad. When his fiancee, Katarina Brunn, was kidnapped by the Voldarens, Siegfried left his home, vowing revenge on the vampires that stole his beloved and his countrymen that stood idly by while it happened.

Combat Tactics. Siegfried uses *invisibility* to get around a battlefield without being disturbed. When pressed into combat, he casts *mirror image*, then lets loose *lightning bolts* and *chromatic orbs*. Siegfried uses his reaction to either cast *shield* (if hit) or *counterspell* (if a nasty spell is directed at him). Finally, *lightning leap* and *misty step* allow him to escape melee range if an adventurer is up in his face.

The Thing

Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 136 (13d12 + 52)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)	4 (–3)	12 (+1)	9 (–1)

Damage Immunities lightning
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages ---
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The thing makes two attacks; one with its bite and one with its tail. It can't make both attacks against the same target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the thing can't bite another target.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

PICTURE

The culmination of Siegfried's last explorations in alchemy, this abomination combines the choice traits of a variety of creatures. The end result is a huge, reptilian beast with the strength of a dozen men and an even more voracious appetite.

Vampire Spawn Warrior

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (half plate)
Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)
Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +3
Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages the languages it knew in life
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Regeneration. The vampire regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from holy water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

Vampire Weaknesses. Innistrad vampires have the following flaws:
Dryad's Legacy. The vampire is particularly vulnerable to weapons made of living wood.
Reflection. A vampire that sees itself in a mirror has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.
Running Water. The vampire cannot cross running water in which the moon is reflected.

Actions

Multiattack. The vampire makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is grappled by the vampire, incapacitated, or restrained.
Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

PICTURE

Innistrad vampires do not sleep in a coffin, nor are they severely hampered by sunlight. The origins of their creation gave them other flaws, however, such as a vulnerability to living wood and a fear of their own horrible reflections.

For more information on Innistrad's unique twist on vampires and the vampires families that rule Stensia, check out the Planeswalker's Guide to Stensia.

APPENDIX C: HANDOUTS

You can download high quality versions of all the props and handouts from this adventure here. These are meant to be shown to the players, so it would be best to print these out seperately and handed to them when the adventure prompts you to. Here is the list of handouts in the order that they appear in the APPENDIX; where they are found in the adventure, and high-quality download links:

- Geralf's coded letter: found in the alchemist's basement (p22)
- Katarina's music puzzle: found in the music room (p23)
- All the new magic items in card form
- All the maps made for this adventure

CREDITS

This adventure was created by me, Tomer Abramovici, also known on Reddit as /u/SpiketailDrake or on Twitter @BudgetCommander . I had a lot of help along the way, and exceptionally talented folks contributed to this final product:

- *Player's Guide to Innistrad: Human Variants*, along with all the maps included in this adventure, were created by redditor /u/Nihilates
- Geralf's coded letter found in the basement of the alchemy shop in Chapter 2 was created by redditor /u/RanAngel

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